With UNRRA in Jerusalem 1944 - 1947

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Preface

World War II was still in full tide when, on November 9th 1943, forty-four countries signed the agreement which brought the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration into existence. The organization was to "plan, co-ordinate, administer or arrange for the administration of measures for the relief of victims of war in any area under the control of any of the United Nations, through the provision of food, fuel, clothing, shelter and other basic necessities, medical and other services." Its freedom from discrimination, its idealism, and the hope it represented gave it the prompt and generous backing that was needed to launch such an effort. From 1944 through June of 1947 UNRRA offered millions of people the choice of going home or of refusing to do so and remaining abroad. By allowing them to make their choice, the participating nations officially accepted for the first time the concept, that those who rejected their own government's political position, as well as those who accepted it, should have consideration and assistance from the international community. In addition UNRRA accomplished distribution of foodstuffs and supplies for basic living with such efficiency and dispatch that it proved to the world what can be done if people have but the will to do.

But let me set down some details about how I got mixed up in international service in the first place.

In 1924, I entered the University of Toronto as "a student of mature age, on probation", having delayed my education on account of family needs. At graduation in June of 1928 I was offered a scholarship in psychology, but I owed too much on loans during my undergraduate years to be able to accept it. I went to work first in Eaton's Department Store for about a year, then in the Robert Simpson Company as assistant manager in the employment office for five years. Although in both companies I worked in "service" departments, I had already decided not to spend my working life in money-making enterprises if I could help it. The Great Depression was not a time to set out in new directions but by 1934 I was enrolled at Columbia University in New York for a master's degree in psychology, and working for a chewing gum company in Long Island City as a personnel officer. A harsher, more strident setting than the latter would be hard to find, but it served my financial purposes, was good field experience for my graduate work, and reinforced my decision to find a service assignment some place as soon as the degree was in hand. An offer to be Associate Director of Greenwich Settlement House in Barrow Street, Greenwich Village, in Manhattan, meant that I was able to quit the chicle company after two years. I then

enjoyed an association with the settlement house director, Mary Kingsbury Simkhovitch, in its varied programme for a stretch of five years.

Canada had been at war since September 1939 and my conscience told me I should go home and help. It took The Department of Labour and the new Unemployment Insurance Commission a while to get organized in Ottawa, but by 1942 they were ready to offer me the position of Employment Adviser for Women. There were eleven men as advisors, each with an industry as his field of interest, mining, agriculture, shipbuilding and so on. My work concerned women's employment interests across Canada, and there were supporting inspectors and field advisors within the unit on a regional basis. Woman power across the country was becoming recognized as having genuine importance as a contribution to the war effort. We were recruited women from the Prairie provinces to work in the factories and mills in Ontario and Quebec, inspecting conditions of work for women, attempting to better their status through efforts to win them equal pay, and to have them replace men in many types of work.

By the mid-forties, the organization and structure to handle war needs had pretty well hardened into shape in Ottawa. Political interests were jockeying to get control, and frequently appeared to interfere with accomplishment of the job. My experience in the working field to date had been too broad

and lively for me gracefully to accept a government groove for it takes a certain fatalism to work in a civil service setting. The burst of patriotism which had brought me to Ottawa sputtered out in the realities of a growing bureaucracy. So it was natural for me to put myself in the market again in search of a more useful opportunity.

It was also natural that I should be attracted by the United Nations' deliberations on setting up some sort of organization to help the millions of people left homeless and destitute by the lengthening war. The idealism of such a venture quite naturally attracted those of us, trained or untrained, in the interests of social service. Little did I, and perhaps even UNRRA relize that the working experience I had so far acquired would prove pertinent and valuable in meeting the challenges of that organization's new programmes.

In June, 1944, I applied for a job with UNRRA in Washington. Of the many social service organizations I had approached, this was the one for which I most wanted to work. My disappointment was great when they wrote they did not have a suitable assignment for me. Among the private voluntary agencies I had approached, the American Christian Committee for Refugees seemed to offer the most likely opportunity. In the end I agreed to accept their offer, which in fact allowed

me to be placed under the direction of the Displaced Persons Division of UNRRA to work overseas. Washington was to be Headquarters for UNRRA, and there was to be an office in London to carry responsibility for Europe and the Middle East, and to be called the European Regional Office (ERO).

UNRRA had a three-part headquarters structure to carry responsibility for communications, for central administration, and for liaison with the military. The military were to inform UNRRA when civilian work in a country could begin, and were to say how many staff would be required. Experience proved that for the most part military estimates of staff needed were too high, but as a first international programme of such dimensions, doubtless it was better to err in this direction than not to provide adequate manpower for the work to be done.

There were originally four divisions into which UNRRA's work was to be channelled and administered in the field, 1 Displaced Persons; 2 Welfare; 3 Movements and 4 Supply.

1. The Displaced Persons Division (DPD) "develops policies on and is responsible for arrangements for and the registration of displaced persons, and for their care and

repatriation, or return to place of former residence."[1]

The term "displaced persons" was new. The old word "refugee", although still used, was not thought sufficiently inclusive to cover those people displaced but unwilling to return to their homelands where political leadership had changed hands. It is perhaps worth noting, however, that UNRRA's successor organization was named the International Refugee Organization and did not include the "DPs" in its title. The age-old term was the one that best described the people's plight. It was believed there might be as many as 10 million people in Europe and the Middle East for whom arrangements would have to be made. The choice to go or stay, as stated above, was to be their own, without political pressure one way or the other. However, it was assumed that most people would want to be repatriated, and although UNRRA's charter granted choice to go home or stay away, no provision was made in the charter for resettlement. It was not until the International Refugee Organization (IRO) followed UNRRA that moves elsewhere were allowed for.

2. The Welfare Division managed the planning for and construction of camps for temporary shelter. Any care

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[1] History of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration in 3 volumes by George Woodbridge, Chief Historian of UNRRA, New York, Columbia University Press, 1950, Vol.I chart 1 page 158.

to be given the refugees was to be available to them through the camps. There was no provision for relief payments or cash grantes. It was this fact that made necessary a small registration office in Jerusalem, where the many "free-living" refugees of Palestine and Lebanon could register with the United Nations.

3. The Movements Division arranged for "flights" of refugees (The term flight used in this sense predates the airplane; groups of people moved by trains, ships, or road were all called flights).

4. The Supply Division assumed logistic responsibilities in the carrying out of the organization's programme.

UNRRA's official history[1] is a good conventional record prepared at headquarters before and immediately after the organization was terminated. It deals almost entirely with high level governmental relationships with the donor countries. The main field of interest is Europe, and it covers the increasing emphasis, (if not controversy) on repatriation.

No space is given to a description of the programmes in the field; there is no record of successful work, nor of attempts that foundered. There is room for such a record, with close examination of staffing and recruitment problems, of the

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[1] History of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration by George Woodbridge, chief historian of UNRRA. New York, Columbia University Press, 1950.

experiences of foreigners working in teams in countries that had not had such assistance before, of relationships with the military, and so on. Much was learnt from this first international social service effort but no record of that learning has been made for future use. Perhaps that is because World War II was supposed to be a war to end wars.

The present account does not pretend to fill this gap. It is not written as a full or even partial history of UNRRA's work in the Middle East. Rather, it is an informal account, from the vantage point of the Jerusalem office, of UNRRA's work and relationships as they developed there. It includes the personal experiences of one who was privileged to serve in a unique capacity, not only within UNRRA, but in a place where history was unfolding. The disaster befalling the Jews in Europe thrust Palestine into its role of sanctuary even more emphatically than the Balfour Declaration or the Zionists had envisaged. Any office set up in Palestine to help people would have its share of that burden, whatever preconceived plan for its work had been devised. UNRRA Jerusalem was no exception, but the crucial point to ponder was the fact that an international agency was honouring the people's wishes, be they Gentiles or Jews, in helping them to go home. The Jews that came to UNRRA in Jerusalem were a minority of each

nationality, to be sure. Nevertheless the fact that they were given choice meant Palestine was still a free country - and on the basis of this one fact all the help we needed to get the job done was readily available from the British Mandate Government and the British military.

So this is but a record of one person's experience with UNRRA and of her life and reactionas as the work unfolded. It incorporates much of the material in journals kept during the three years spent in the Middle East. Indeed it is on the basis of the journals that I decided to put such a record together, for obviously they serve better than memory thirty years later. Many former UNRRA employees and others familiar with UNRRA's work have told me I had the plum of the staff assignments, that no other offered the freedom for creative work in a setting where history was in the making. I wouldn't disagree with them. I would only say that if those days were to be lived over again I might have prepared myself with more knowledge and a background of all the elements that then made up that multi-faceted area. In a way I would agree with the one time British High Commissioner, Sir Ronald Storrs, who closed his big book, Orientations, a record of his service in Palestine, with the statement, "There is no experience after Jerusalem."

CHAPTER I

From New York to Cairo.

By the spring of 1944, it was known that the vast majority of the people that UNRRA would have to help were displaced within Europe where the war was still being fought. It was also known that many people had fled to Mediterranean areas. There was hope that in Yugoslavia, in Albania and in Greece, and throughout the Middle East where things were already calmer, early work would soon be possible.

By August UNRRA had offices in Washington and London and the first field group "the Balkan Mission" had been recruited, was being given one month's training in College Park at the University of Maryland and was in line for transportation overseas. A few people from the Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations (OFRRO), the US civilian relief effort, had already been transferred from their North African assignments to Cairo where the Headquarters of the work in the Middle East was to be, and where MERRA, the British effort was already at work.

From May 1st 1944 the office in Cairo had almost the status of a regional office. The long delay in getting the Balkan Mission into the field finally ended in March 1945 after the termination of hostilities. From then on the Cairo office had the responsibility for displaced persons in the Middle East,

in Africa and in India. Sir William Matthews, who had been head of MERRA became the director of UNRRA in Cairo, and his deputy was Neville Miller, erstwhile mayor of Louisville, Kentucky. Some 50,000 refugees, mainly Greek and Yugoslav lived in camps established by MERRA at El Shatt near the Suez Canal, at Moses Wells (formerly an Egyptian quarantine station for Mecca pilgrims on the canal) Souk-el-Garb, Nuseirat in Palestine, Khatatbe on the desert road between Cairo and Alexandria, and Tolumbat near Alexandria which housed Yugoslav Royalists, and political trouble makers from the Greek Camps. It was recognized that there were also some "free-living" refugees for whose repatriation UNRRA would be responsible. The official history mentions these DPs as living throughout the Middle East Africa and India, but makes no specific mention of the hundreds of such people in Palestine and Lebanon.

To return to my personal record of that time, New York City in the summer of 1944 was a poor place to be seeking work, or even to sit out the days until replies to applications were received. it was a hot and steamy summer. But it was a momentous one for me, for it witnessed the beginnings of my connection with UNRRA. As I have already mentioned, I accepted an offer from the American Christian Committee for Refugees (ACCR) to work for them, on assignment by UNRRA in its Displaced Persons division overseas. By August I was among those receiving one month's training at College Park, University of Maryland,

planned for all those recruited by UNRRA or the voluntary agencies in USA and Canada. UNRRA had drawn together a very mixed group of people as faculty for the school at College Park. People who had served abroad for the US government, whether or not in a humanitarian capacity, people who had come as immigrants from countries that had experienced war, disasters or emergencies and were familiar with mass relief operations, with differences in working methods of various governments abroad, people with background in anthropology, economics, sociology and so on all trying to alert us to the varying patterns we might find in situations and in the people of other countries. It was quite evident that an effort had been made, based on the untarnished idealism that was plain in the new organization, to start it off with a clean sheet unsullied by any vestige of politics or bureaucracy. Appeals were made to member governments for capable administrators. To many in officialdom the natural answer was to be found among the army officers gradually being released from their military responsibilities as the war ended. Exceptional ones among them proved successful, but it was part of the educational process of this new pioneering effort to reveal shortcomings in the "militiry types" for creative community work.

The faculty was not any more mixed than the students. We were a motley group of new recruits, some with professional training and experience, some with an applicable foreign language, some who were just good people. All of us, faculty

and studentsalike, gained insight into our group and its suitability as we worked together on hypothetic projects and possible emergencies as we imagined they might develop. There were those among us who had equally high ideals with UNRRA. Even to hear the girls talk of what they had packed in their foot lockers was however revealing of how differently we looked on an assignment overseas. One girl bound for Greece had packed her locker full of sugar and soap and primus stoves, utilitarian things she hoped the Greeks would be glad to have. At the other end of the spectrum was the girl who packed hers with gay little hats as she was sure much of her social work planning abroad would be accomplished with the foreigners over dinner and a dance floor. By and large we were a serious crowd and took our instructions to forget our nationality and be truly international in our approach, very solemnly. The argument for and against wearing our own country's badge on our uniform, was cut short wiht the requirement that we wear only the UNRRA letters on our epaulets. An oath of loyalty was signed by each UNRRA employee, and we were urged to consider ourselves as international servants and to shelve our individual national loyalties for the duration.

The wearing of uniforms was, however, only obligatory for those staff members working in teams in the camps, or on movements with flights of refugees. The uniforms came in for a good deal of derision, mainly because they were assembled from various countries whose inventories allowed inroads more

than for their own military recruits. I'll not soon forget the suppressed laughter in British military offices in Jerusalem when I appeared one morning in khaki, an American army skirt, a British battlejacket and a black French beret. From then on I wore civvies, which my assignment permitted.

Our notebooks were full of information that had been given us in the four weeks briefing, to some of us it made more sense than to others. Heretofore there was little experience applicable in this kind of organization, structure, and concept of working abroad. Quite naturally some among the student group had training and experience that might be transferable, at least in part. For others it was an initiation to a whole new first experience, and they had little background on which to hang the new knowledge. One lecture impressed many of us. It was given by an ex-welfare official from Cologne, Dr. Herta Kraus, who had spent hours describing distribution of supplies in a city or a country, and other relief and ration programmes and procedures. Our last session with her proved as memorable to many of us as any other. She talked about the need to identify with the people of the country in which we found ourselves working, that unless we could and did identify we would not be making our maximum contribution, in short that we should make an effort to find at least one friend there. Once this happened we would begin to see things through their eyes, and thus make our work pertinent and our own experience a reality.

This was good advice. So often in the years since then, I have watched as national groups stick together in isolation, and have heard the echo of this early admonition and realized once again how true it is.

Word finally came, early one September afternoon that we were to leave for Cairo immediately. The four weeks training and briefing in College Park had stretched into five and then six, since shipping space was on a priority basis. We had despaired of ever getting away, and had become dilatory in some cases about getting final bits of business in order. So when we were given three hours to get ourselves and our 55 lbs. of luggage ready for the trip to New York and to sail, there were some signs of panic in the residence, and frantic efforts to accomplish all the detail left undone on documentation, travellers cheques, and so on. Fifty-two women and a hundred and twelve men left Washington that September, 1944. The men joined Liberty Ships in various east coast ports and had a voyage more typical of wartime than did the women.

We were allowed to go our separate ways in New York and I didn't realize my good fortune in experiencing one last bit of American luxury when I stayed with a friend at her sister's "wall to wall" apartment on the upper East Side. The private world of such a home came into sharp contrast when by next evening, we found ourselves at the end of a long taxi ride lining up in a dockside shed in Brooklyn, where we re-

ceived our gas masks and other bits of equipment, climbed down a catwalk stairway on the wall of a great shed and filed through a dimly lit bleak open area, across the whaff and abroad the steamer. We were the focus of a good deal of attention and of catcalls and whistles for although there were units of military women also going aboard, our very miscellany was cause for comment. We were really an indescribable group, almost laughable against the hundreds of uniforms and regimented people that surrounded us. They must have wondered how our mission could be worthy of inclusion.

The Cunard liner RMS Aquitania with ten thousand on board was to be ours for the next five days. She had of course been refitted for the job, and although the handsome grand staircase, the panelling in the lounges were reminders of more leisurely voyages, it could not be said one could have had a more memorable sea voyage. I shared a cabin for four with five others. The usual upper and lower berths had had another one tucked in between and it was my fate to draw one of these. One could roll over with care. Sleeping was pretty comfortable, but by the end of five days, the interior of our kitbags and suitcases indeed the cabin itself looked like a squirrel's nest. Since the lighting was dimmed one searched the congestion in the dark for most things one needed.

There was a routine plan for the days - four sittings for each of two meals which was all the galley could handle

for such a crowd. We used to snaffle a roll and a piece of bacon for a sandwich and stuff it in our pockets as we left the breakfast table. By lunch time, or what seemed such by the way we felt, we were still probably dressed in our raincoats and life jackets and standing or sitting some place on deck in the blustery grey winds off the sea. Boat drill occurred regularly midmorning, and they would leave us with it for roughly two hours, perhaps as a way of assigning us out of mischief. "Delegates" would sneak away to the ship's kiosk,there to line up in the hope of buying an apple or a chocolate bar to supplement the bacon roll. Supplies invariably ran out and many of us were ravenous from the sea air by the time our sitting came for supper that evening. When the bells rang, we would file down for our turn while others filed up. Four strands of people moving up and down that grand staircase in supposedly military precision. Or if you felt like exchanging a word with someone two lines over, the very move to do so brought a clip of the Sergeant's baton on the rail and a boomed "Git in line".

Many of UNRRA's people were professionally "arrived" individuals, long past the days of supervised activities. Yet they took all this in good grace. The real problem for those attempting to keep discipline in a troop ship with such numbers was the complete lack of comprehension among North Americans of the need for total blackout on deck at night. The lounges were crowded, people sitting on the floor or tables or wherever they could find a perch. It was perfectly natural to go

out on deck to sit in the wind and fill the lungs with fresh sea air, but many simply could not grasp that lighting a cigarette might leave the whole shipload exposed to torpedo fire from a submarine. It was glaring proof of how innocent of war our whole North American contient was, there was no concept of the danger even one match could risk. For those of us who loved the sea, this was an experience we'd never match again. The wartime blackout provided a rare and precious opportunity to stand at the rail and watch the changing universe around us, the mists and fog drifting by the mast head, the wind swept clouds parting to let the sun drop into the sea. The starlit heaven becoming reflected in the ocean. And then the wonderful images and fantasy that come to life as one listens to the throb of the engines under the pillow at night. All this loveliness surrounding us, as most among us go forth to war. The days passed quickly enough with the grey sea overcase in a heavy fog most of the time. Two British destroyers came out to meet us as we neared the Irish Sea. That last day the sea was calmer but the effect on the passengers was apparent. Some were excited and talked of all they could see. Others turned quiet and within themselves. As we neared Gouroch the glowering clouds broke and shafts of sunlight from a lemon sky emphasized the colour of the green hills, rows and rows of grey houses, chimney pots all smoking at supper time. It was an impressive contrast to the city we'd left behind.

A blacked out night train to London rattling through countryside we as newcomers would so much like to have seen. By morning it was still dark as we went in buses to the Red Cross hostel where we were to be billeted for the short stay in London. In queues in front of the desk with suitcases, dufflebags and all our belongings beside us, I fell out of line to go and call my English cousins. To tell them in advance I was coming was of course impossible, not just because our trip was precipitated, but because the censors would have prevented it. So the surprise was great and the welcome such that I picked up my bags and left the line to go find Ashley Gardens. It was still dark outside and no hour to find a cab. I struggled aboard the rear step of a bus and hung on till they "put me down" and directed me where to walk. Weno had a great big old fashioned flat with an enormous living room heated by a tiny fireplace. Living was pinched and difficult in the autumn of 1944 and the bombs that clattered at night gave one no peace to sleep. It was to me impressive and admirable the way they lived with difficulties but maintained their standards and their spirits. I was embarrassed at their generosity over the rationed bits of meat, but by good luck got my ration tickets in time enough as a contribution to help them.

We were in London a week, and the days were filled with visits arranged by the Red Cross to instiutions that might have bearing on our work, relief and supply centers,

emergency hostels, one in an underground station, and a rural hostel for children run by Foster Parents' Plan. The youngsters were bundled to keep them warm but they could see their breath in the cold rooms, where windows were wide open to let in the fresh air "to keep the children healthy". There were lectures, language practice, and finally a daylight train to Liverpool. We boarded the S. S. Capetown Castle, the Union Castle liner nowrmally plying between Capetown and Liverpool. She was camouflaged like others berthed beside her, ready to embark in convoy.

A high wind kept our ship and many others tied up in Liverpool harbour two full days. Those who knew this harbour realized that there was no alternative. Those of us who were strangers to the peculiarities of the coastal entrance, however, were further impressed at the leisurely gait our whole trip was taking. When the wind dropped, our engines truned over and the soft noise of the sea on our hull began, we watched in open admiration as some forty ships maneuvered themselves into their allotted positions in convoy. Thus we sailed to Gibraltar. Then suddenly overnight we realized we were on our own through the Mediterranean to Port Said. The other ships had gone their own way, mostly to South Africa, without so much as a blast on the whistle. What a spoilsport war can be.

This time we were 4500 on board, all British officers and men except the UNRRA contingent of 42 women. The discipline aboard came much more naturally to this group who'd known the war for five years past than to those of us who were new but

became quickly infected with the cooperative spirit. There was much comment the first morning at breakfast, when the British sat and stared at their plates with two eggs and bacon apiece. Some of them hadn't seen a fresh egg in years. The trip was nothing more nor less than a pleasure cruise. Of course we knew there was danger, but the weather was good, the little ship a good sailor. There were language sessions and again boat drill, but we were captives in a luxurious idleness that pushed the war to the back of our minds, and gave us a freedom from responsibilities that made it all seem like a beautiful dream.

Then one day we found our ship tied up at quayside in Port Said, our sea voyage at an end. Before we boarded the train for Upper Egypt and Cairo, there was ample time for us to see this gateway to the East. Broad paved walkways interspersed with gay gardens had a backdrop of handsome stone buildings and a centrepiece statue of Ferdinand De Lesseps, the man who conceived the idea of the Suez Canal. All this displayed the wealth and stability the canal had brought to Egypt, apart altogether from any amount anybody else had received therefrom. But in contrast to this, here in front of us, surrounding us, beseeching us, were the people of Egypt. As long as westerners travelled by sea, it was here that most received their introduction to the poverty of the east,such was the case for us in September, 1944.

As our noisy clattering little train raced through

the desert landscape toward Cairo, we stood at the open windows silent and spellbound with the plight of the people. Imagine spending a lifetime thus, among mud huts, hovels, windowless and without floors, amid mud-walled yards piled with dried cow dung to be used as fuel. Women in black shrouds covering the figure and most of the face, a symbolic and a real means of changing all countrywomen of Egypt into non-persons. The men in nondescript, shapeless shifts, perhaps once white but usually dun-coloured. Children sometimes naked, sometimes in shapeless gowns. Babies in arms with flies crawling over their faces tormenting their eyes. The only animated group were the children old enough to run by the trainside, begging "backshees", although the wooden plough and the water buffalo hauling produce showed that some at least of the people had work. Our group in the train, apart from British officials, French, German, or others who had come over the years to live in and love Egypt, probably were the largest group of social or humanitarian workers that had ever been collected in one train to come down this route through the heart of Egypt. We could easily see that the help needed here was immeasurably great, all kinds of help. How could people living in such squalor and degradation be expected to be called "citizens" and to know about their human rights. How could they rouse themselves either to work, or to protest their lot. Adult faces were mask-like, and eons away from a smile. A lovely scene for an artist - desert sand, freshwater canal with green banks and trees planted by its roadside,

huts with thatch, brown-skinned children with dazzling white teeth and eyes with black pool centers. All very beautiful to be sure, but what suffereing and endurance life demanded of them. By the time darkness had fallen and our train pulled into Cairo, an urgent dictum was on everyone's lips - "Why don't we begin working right here, no country can possibly need help more than this."

At the station in Cairo, we were led to British army trucks with benches, and in these we went to Camp Maadi on the outskirts of Cairo. To me it was a privilege to spend those first few nights in a Cawnpore tent on the Egyptian desert. Was it Kipling or Henty that had made one aware of these big canvas rooms that sheltered from the midday heat, or the desert cold at night. The lapped screens at the entrance the cots, and hanging lantern, and the tripod canvas wash basin, it was all there and I revelled in it, as I did the uneathly moonlight that lit up the undulation of the desert by night. I could have stayed on in Maadi indefinitely, but it was a long way out of town and gradually arrangements were made to move us into the city. With three other staff I moved late one afternoon to a designated hotel, and we were given two twin bedded rooms. When we found the linen had been used, I was delegated to call the desk from the hall phone. When I asked that it be changed, the question came "couldn't it wait till morning"...

UNRRA's Displaced Persons division was housed in

Darrel-Shifa, a street in a suburb called Garden City. It was a small apartment complex that let itself to a series of offices. One of these was my base for the weeks I spent in Cairo. I found myself a place to live near enough that I could walk to the office. Across the road from the British Embassy, the widow of an erstwhile London Times correspondent had space in her big apartment for two roomers. My room a comfortable high ceilinged bedroom had French doors to a balcony and a view across the Embassy gardens to the Nile. It was cool, quiet and charming, the two Egyptian houseboys brought me breakfast, took care of my laundry and made me feel at home during my first Cairo stay.

The Cairo of those days had a special atmosphere about it that seemed to keep the war out of sight and out of mind. There were, to be sure, plenty of military people from various countries, France, Australia, Britain, New Zealand, Poland and so on, around the city, but because their camps or bases were for the most part out of town, they came into the city only on their off duty hours. No military air traffic, no bombs exploding, no artillery fire, none of the unpleasantness that goes with war. Instead a deceptively quiet city with lots of interest for the newcomer.

Like other river cities elsewhere, Cairo had grown as the Nile river traffic made it a center for trade and commerce, and eventually became the Egyptian capital. It was a city built of grey-beige stone like the pyramids. When the sun shone and it nearly always did, the contrast of light and

shadow gave the streets their character. If there was no sunshine,grey-clouded skies emphasized the colour of the buildings. There was then an anonymity about its streets and circles, which robbed the city of its distinction and made it a grey indecipherable mass. At siesta time when traffic slowed or was gone from the streets the city seemed like a ghost town. The shrill cries of the soaring kites overhead were the only evidence of life and seemed to comment on the city's desertion.

The Nile, however, did not dominate Cairo; it created space and a life of its own which was a release and a relief from the city's congestion. Ghezira, the big island in the river, reached by bridges almost at center town, had come to have many wealthy properties and homes, but the largest stretch of open land was the Gezira Club, a sports club run by the British for their own use, but admitting those of us in UNRRA to all its facilities, its tennis courts, its pool and restaurants, if not by our choice to its cricket field. It was a beautiful tract of land and revealed what a bit of planning, planting and maintenance could do to turn it into a source of refreshing pleasure. It was, as it was originally hoped to be, almost reminiscent of English lawns and trees.

Many of us spent most of our leisure time at this club. There were other ways, however, the better to know Egypt. Thy pyramids were there to marvel at, their stones much too big and high to encourage climbing. Their mysteries in design

and execution made us silent and thoughtful as we stared at these 5000 year old monuments. At the Sphinx one could ride a camel decked out in old fashioned handwoven camel bags, colourful and tasseled. Our efforts to accept the camel ride amused both the Egyptians and ourselves. Not many of us were enticed into more than a few yards of travel on top of the heaving beast.

There were trips to various tombs, ruins, oases in the desert that one could take for a Sunday jaunt, and there were more ambitious trips north to the Delta or Alexandria, or south to Upper Egypt, Luxor and the Valley of the Kings, usually by train and then on donkey-back. In those days Cairo still had a wealth of ruins and remnants of early mosques scattered all through formerly fine sections of the city. If one were fortunate enough to find a person who really knew the city's history and treasures and would serve as a guide, it was possible to have a visual feast of bits of carving, Arab art, minarets, the mushrabiyeh, the light and shade in a stone grilling, stained glass, or even the remnant of a pillar and its capital. These were evidences of a talented people. The swarming slums that surrounded and almost buried most of these archeological finds provided vivid contrast. The needs of the people, the poverty, the evidence of malnutrition, of illiteracy, idleness, made it impossible for some among us to enjoy such exploring. To others our own enforced idleness, waiting for the time when our help would be needed made sight-

seeing seem almost a balm to developing frustration.

The international group of newcomers living in hotels and apartments scattered about the city came to be conspicuous in its size. By the end of 1944 some 957 of us were cooling our heels in Cairo. There was a consciousness among us that this was not a fortunate state of affairs for the agency, which was paying a high price to be fully ready for service when the call came. With the priorities for travel what they were, and the demands of war and peace still jockeying for pre-eminence, however, it is doubtful if there was any other alternative.

In my case, and I daresay I was not alone in this, the enforced idleness pricked my conscience more than I liked. I had been recruited by a voluntary agency (ACCR) who were paying my salary, and I was assigned to UNRRA who were paying my per diem, and this seemed to my way of thinking a dreadful way of spending funds that had been contributed by national governments to use in an international humanitarian programme. When I left North America it was planned I should work in Yugoslavia; I therefore was studying the Serbo-Croatian language. But the time I arrived in Cairo the word was, "Tito doesn't want any more women". Conditions in Yugoslavia were too rough for women and so I was one of the minority of recruits for whom a new assignment had to be found. For a time, it was thought I would be going to Athens to be a part of the Greece mission, and so I switched to studying modern Greek.

Indeed language study was our main interest and occupation, and we applied ourselves for the most part diligently. Still there were hours left over for sightseening, or for getting to know our Egyptian friends better. There was, however, evidence that some among us could not handle so much free time. Even before the work opened up for us, a few individuals were shipped home as unsuitable. Some people who were recruited for work abroad seemed to assume that the barriers of society which they were willing to live with at home did not exist for them elsewhere and therefore "anything goes". A few had even come to escape restrictions at home. Most of us, however, believed it was well to find out about local customs and standards and try to accept them. There were so many unknowns in the whole situation that the choosing of suitable recruits was a problem for UNRRA, and continued to be for some time, until enough experience had been built up to see what the needs really were, and what kind of people were needed to meet them.

An innocent controversy over the use of siesta, continued long after we had accepted it, and abided by it. A lunch hour that extended into three hours gave us a stretch of time useful in many ways even though at the height of the day's heat, whereas, when the office closed at seven p.m., it was too late for sightseeing or shopping of any extent. Anyone who has spent prolonged time in the tropics knows well that the way to keep their health and sanity is to observe the siesta, to ca~~o~~llapse and enjoy it, but we were too new to recognize or

perhpas to need, its benefits. We looked on the three precious hours as a dividend that allowed us to become tourists sightseeing and having fun shopping. However, the motive for our joining UNRRA was to help people in trouble. The more we saw of Egypt the more we realized the irony of our predicament. We were spending weeks, even months, in frustrating idleness in a country that badly needed assistance to lift its people out of degradation and poverty. Yet there was no way under UNRRA's charter that we could help them.

The public health nurses among us were distressed at the signs of sickness - children with bloated stomachs, rashes or infections. No one, it was said, completed the twelve treatments necessary to cure bilharzia. By the sixth or eight treatment evidence of the disease was gone, so the patients quit coming, and when the symptoms returned, they had to begin all over again. One of the welfare divisions social workers was so distressed at the way the flies crawled over babies' faces and eyes, the mothers being too listless to fan them away, that she, the worker felt the children should be encouraged to kill the flies. She offered a piastre (2¢) a bottle for every bottle of dead flies they could collect and bring to her. It wasn't long before she had to stop the programme as she found the children breeding flies to bring to her office.

Some among us who loved dancing were not inhibited by the beautiful but hard tiled floors Cairene restaurants in

variably had to offer. There were many restaurants and hotels that had good orchestras and a place to dance at dinner time. The road out towards the pyramids had a number of places to choose from, yet the trip all the way to the Mena House always seemed worth it. Good music and food. The white damasked tables always had a vase of wild red roses, and there were verandahs and gardens and a general atmosphere surrounding this old hotel that made its record of famous visitors seem quite credible. In the days before quick transportation, people came to stay at Mena House in order to see the pyramids from here, whereas today tourists use but a half-day to come, to see, and to return to the city. In 1944, one occasionally saw King Farouk across the dining room, not necessarily at Mena House, but in those restaurants that had a dance floor.

We learned during these months that there were currently 7,000 young Egyptians who had spent various periods of time being educated abroad, and who were now at home and idle. They could not find work and the government did not know what to do with them. Through the years the subject of education abroad for young people from developing countries has been much discussed, and there are widely differing points of view about its validity and value. Too many promising young people that have been chosen by their governments to go, end up staying abroad to become immigrants in the developed world. The gap between their home countries and those in which they are educated is too wide for them to return home easily, and so a government scholarship makes of them an expatriate. There is an

awareness of this situation, but thus far no action has been taken to correct it.

CHAPTER II

Establishing UNNRA's Jerusalem Office.

About the middle of November, shortly before the American Thanksgiving in 1944, Clarence M. Pierce (Red), in charge of the Displaced Persons Division, asked four of us within that division and awaiting assignment to consider four possible postings and let him know which one we each would choose for ourselves. The four tasks were: (1) counselling and welfare work in a Yugoslav camp in Egypt, (2) being in charge of displaced persons work in the UNRRA offices in Athens, (3) making a survey of the work UNRRA should do in Palestine, Lebanon and Syria, and (4) investigating the possibility of refugees being resettled in Northern Syria. This last was a very hush-hush idea, and we were asked to keep it secret.

Number three interested me the most, and Pierce said they had hoped it would do. He said that quite frankly UNRRA wanted to put a man in charge of this investigation, and also in charge subsequently of any work UNRRA would have to do there. The trouble was, they had no one suitable for the task. In the meantime Bernard Lowe who was awaiting the opening of the work in Yugoslavia, would also go to Jerusalem and we would work together on the research and investigation. This was

a depressing idea from my point of view. Nice as he was, Mr. Lowe was ex-military, an Englishman of the old fashioned colonial officer type, inflexible and a bit pompous. I could only hope Yugoslavia would need him soon.

There was precious little material on Palestine, and the Levant States, that one could study in the UNRRA offices. The flights of Greek refugees from both the mainland and the islands had been large enough and frequent enough that we knew this would probably be the main focus. Who else there would be was the unanswered question, although there were indications that both Polish and Czech refugees had found Palestine a haven more adaptable for their pruposes than other Middle East countries.

It was imperative that we have copies of UNRRA's clauses for eligibility. These would of course be required by any field office or camp, but undoubtedly they would be even more necessary as guidelines in an office dealing entirely with "free-living" individuals or families requesting assistance.[1] They are included here as a footnote, but they carried a vastly more important role in the day to day work in the Jerusalem office, where the surrounding population and those among them who came to ask for help could hardly be said to be homogenous.

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[1] UNRRA's definition of eligibility for assistance taken from the History of UNRRA Vo. II page 471 -479 "possibilities" -

(i) Those citizens of member governments who have been obliged to leave their homes by reason of the war and found in liberated or conquered territories.

(ii) Those citizens of member governments who have been displaced within their own (liberated) countries.

From the beginning the main emphasis in UNRRA's planning was repatriation. As speculation turned into reality with experience, it was plain the organization would be responsible for care of refugees to a much greater extent than was originally foreseen. The numbers of refugees unwilling to return to their countries or places of former residence became substantially enough, especially among the thousands applying to UNRRA in Europe to make this fact increasingly apparent.

The travel office arranged our papers, and secured our reservations on a military flight to Jerusalem right after Thanksgiving. Mr. Lowe and I arrived in Jerusalem late afternoon, went our own ways to find accommodations, and agreed to meet again next morning in the lobby of the King David Hotel to plan our approaches to the government and military. During

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(iii) Those citizens of member governments in other countries who are exiles as a result of the war, and whose return to their homes in liberated territories is regarded as a matter of urgency.

(iv) Those citizens of member governments in other countries and (also) those stateless persons who have been driven as a result of the war from their places of settled residence in countries of which they are not nationals, to return to those places.

(v) Other categories of persons which can be shown to fall within the proper scope of UNRRA's activities.

Experience in the application of these clauses caused UNRRA to widen them in a number of ways "or other persons who have been obliged to leave their country or place of origin or former residence or who have been deported therefrom, by action of the enemy, because of race, religion or activities in favour of the United Nations." A further resolution extended UNRRA eligibility to such persons (as above) found in liberated territory.

our preliminary conversation that first morning a telegram from Cairo Headquarters arrived saying the Yugoslav team was to go forward soonest. Lowe was to return to Cairo immediately; Brown was to stay and make the investigation. I said goodbye to Mr. Lowe and made my own plans for the work.

Between that time and Christmas 1944 I spent a month in Palestine and Lebanon with improvised arrangements, attempting to find out who the authorities considered refugees and where and how they lived, and to gather any figures or statistics that were valid enough to use. Through the British army movements office, I was given transportation to reach villages and settlements where there were groups of Poles and Czechs. Sometimes I rode in a three-ton truck with a British Tommy taking supplies to a military camp near a cluster of refugees I wanted to visit. Once I rode in a French army jeep with a Polish driver at a speed downhill that left me breathless. Government offices and the military in Palestine and Lebanon, as well as the Red Cross were supportive and helpful. In about four weeks time I had, I thought, a pretty good working knowledge of the refugees awaiting help. Having pulled together a report on the problem, I flew back to Cairo headquarters in Daerl-Shifa. There it seemed a bit of a surprise that a woman could have produced such a paper. When they asked if I would go back and do the job, quite naturally I asked if I was to be in charge, and their assent to this question meant that I accepted the assignment.

To me it seemed a miracle had happened. This type of assignment, to organize and administer a program to help people, to carry the responsibility for relationships in the community, with the government, the military and any private groups touching on our work, to have the freedom of planning and carrying out UNRRA's charter as it applied to these three countries was a tremendous challenge, yet one I knew I could handle. To have it all before me as work to be done, in a setting as meaningful, as historic, as romantic and beautiful as the city of Jerusalem, was more than I could believe. My cup was full.

To speak of the military in the Middle East of 1944 was, in the main, to refer to the British, who had been in the area for decades either as outright colonialists or in various tenuous relationships with other countries there. For them the war had begun in September 1939 at the time that Hitler's army entered Poland, and by 1944 British areas of political control in the Middle East covered Egypt and the Sudan, Cyprus, Palestine, Transjordan and included more tenuous links with Iraq and the Persian Gulf States. The Commander-in-chief of the British Forces in the Middle East and his headquarters were in Heliopolis near Cairo. At the next level down Palestine had its own command, as did Greece and Cyprus. The push against Rommel in the North African desert was the major focus of military action by the time the autumn of 1944 rolled around. The ninth army in Lebanon and Syria was held, so it was said, in

readiness in case of a strike by the Germans now in Northern Africa. So tight was this story kept secret, that it was not until hostilities ceased that the ruse was uncovered, and then we learned that "the Ninth Army" was virtually a handful of men and equipment giving the deliberate impression that a full complement was in place and that the story was really a legend. In Transjordan that extraordinary English officer Sir John Bagot Glubb Pasha and the Arab Legion he had trained were a stabilizing influence between the rising controversy in Palestine and the more primitive Iraqi military.

In other words British influence as that of a colonial power in the area, while tapering off as a civilian framework, persisted while the war continued under the aegis of the military. And since by this time colonialists were being criticized and maligned for their actions and their omissions, it was perhaps as well that the military were now taking the lead. In a way their long experience of living and working abroad had made the British neighbourly and willing to be helpful. They were past masters at settling in and making themselves unobtrusively at home in a foreign setting. Certainly, throughout the whole area during these percarious days, the presence of the British military was a unifying influence and a support on which international work could depend. France had released Syria and Lebanon to their own independence and the Arabs in Beirut were heard to mutter as they relaxed, "Now we don't have to have some conversation."

In Palestine, within this widespread though tenuous British Army network across the Middle East, we made our own appeal to the British mandate government, and then to the British military Headquarters for Palestine. Both were well aware that UNRRA was planning to work in Palestine, and as we turned to them for help of various sorts, it was obvious that they intended to do all they could to be supportive. Trains, trucks, and many facilities and services beyond what we had expected would be available for the civilian effort. The Department of Social Welfare of the Palestine Government with the highly intelligent, liberal and compassionate Wilfred Chinn in charge was interested, but wished we had a "care" programme other than that at Nuseirat Camp in southern Palestine. Their relief rolls were long and costs were heavy, but the people they were helping were not eligible for UNRRA's help. If they were, it was only authorized under the camps programme and not as individual cash grants.

We needed an office, so we appealed to the military. If we would find the space we needed, they told us, they would requisition it and assign it to UNRRA. It was difficult to learn of places available in Jerusalem, and our stipulations about size, location and security did not help. But within a British "fortnight" we had found three good-sized rooms and bath all leading off a corridor so that the place could be made self-contained. It was upstairs over the Spanish Consulate, near center town yet near the railway station, in a quarter

called Talbiyeh, We reported to the military that we had found a place well suited to our needs. When the landlord expressed a wish to divide the space differently, so that we would not be self-enclosed as we desired, Captain Gordon of Logistics said they would handle this question. They requisitioned the space we wanted, set a date for us to take possession, set the rental, and to our delight paid the bill. The army helped us board up the unwanted doors, and after a visit to their warehouse for furniture, we began to look as though we were here to stay even longer than we had anticipated. A light airy office, with high ceilings and the tile floors prevalent in the Middle East, it had a good view through an olive grove back towards town.

"We had been long in the office without a sign to tell people who we were when we asked the military for one that read "United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, Office for Palestine and the Levant States." It seemed also that Major Withey took a long time having it made, but finally had two signs painted for us. The first, too large by far, or so I thought, I had the soldier take back. Then came a cable from Gifford and Holcomb saying they were coming up, so I phoned for the big sign to be put on the balcony rail, high enough that it wouldn't look so big. The soldier brought it back and installed it. To my astonishment it looked very well, not a bit too big. A smaller one to be used by the front door will be ready next week."

Settling into a new office with new work in a new country is not a process that moves forward as easily as it would in a more familiar context. However UNRRA's duties were well defined in its charter, and here they were sufficient in volume that very soon a momentum developed, leading us quickly to define and do what was before us. It did not take long for the news that UNRRA had arrived to be known the length and breadth of this little country, from Dan to Beersheba.

UNRRA's Jerusalem office was charged with the responsibility of enrolling refugees who were found eligible under the organization's criteria, and who were "free-living", that is living on their own within Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria. It was estimated there were several hundred Czechoslovaks, Greeks and Poles, all Christians who had been attracted to the scattered population centers of these middle east countries to find their own housing and life in the communities. They were attracted by the climate and more importantly by the fact that the western powers (and therefore western conceptions of people's needs) were in control of these countries. They wanted to make their way on their own, but if this proved impossible for as long as the war lasted they felt that here they could have access to a compassionate leadership. They knew there was a big exmilitary camp in the south of Palestine, Nuseirat, where some 9000 Greeks were being cared for under UNRRA's auspices. But to these people the very idea of a camp of any sort was a threat to their freedom, if not to

their lives. They managed to find work and a way of living as best they could, and in most instances they managed remarkably well on very little. The Mandate Government had limited funds with which to help people, but no one in need of emergency help was turned away.

UNRRA's office was to have the responsibility then, not only of registering eligible refugees and displaced persons throughout the area, but of securing visas for their return home, and ships to take them there when this became possible. It was estimated the task would take six months to a year. Little did we know what the delays and frustrations could be.

As the UNRRA representative in the area, I felt very strongly, and I knew UNRRA Headquarters agreed with me, that the office must take an impartial stance in Palestine, and not become identified with either local community, Arab or Jewish, exclusively. We would begin my employing one Arab and one Jew. As it turned out that was as far as we could make this stance into policy. Palestine was after all an undeveloped country. What skills and training for office work there were, were those of the newly arrived immigrants from the west, and practically non-existent otherwise. The few young Arab boys or girls who were equipped with training were quickly absorbed in conventional opportunities in the city, just as soon as they were available. So the pool of unemployed from which we would draw our staff was largely Jewish.

We began by employing Rose Danziger, Tauber and Mohammed. Mrs. Tauber, a middle-aged widow, became our administrative officer and bookkeeper. A painstaking conscientious worker, she had a serious dedication to our work, but it was leavened with a dry sense of humour. This was all the more remarkable when we knew that she had made the tirp from Berlin alone, the single person surviving among thirty-odd family members and relatives lost in the concentration camps in Europe. Mrs. Tauber was the backbone and strength of our office. Mohammed, equally endearing in his way, was our general factotum, messenger, mail carrier with the driver, and cleaner, and he came to be man of all work at the time of a move of refugees.

In UNRRA's view, the Jerusalem office rated a foreign secretary and whatever translator-interpreters would be needed. In consequence, some months after the office opened, Helen Szpakowski, of Lithuanian and Pittsburgh origin, came to help us. Blonde and beautiful, she seemed to increase the number of reporters looking for news on our doorstep. Her bouyant spirit and laughter offset many a tense or tragic moment. George Nicholakis was with us from the first. His family were members of the Greek community in Cairo, and his abilities had already helped him make progress towards a professional life which developed and was fully realized through his coming to the United States when peace returned. While George had four languages - Greek, Arabic, English and French - his work with UNRRA and in

our office was mainly as a Greek interpreter. The Greeks being voluble people George's help was in great demand.

Mrs. Maria Chapek, a recent Czechoslovak refugee to the USA, was our Czech interpreter, and since she also had German she was further helpful. The group of Czechs in Palestine was not large, and Mrs. Chapek carried the responsibility of enrolling those who came to the office, or by making trips to the towns or villages where they lived. She also enrolled the Austrians through visits to centers where they lived. One of the Czechoslovakian refugees was a doctor who with his family was planning to go home when this became possible. Dr. Mordecai Zeigler in the meantime volunteered to help us in the office in any way he could. He came to be very supportive, especially in giving inoculations but also in emergencies, and with minor health problems of all sorts.

Paula Halpern joined our staff later and took charge of the registration as a whole and of the arrangements to be made at the time of a move. The success of repatriation depended very much on complete and accurate documentation for each individual or family. Illiterate peasant people had difficulties in understanding our fastidious demands, and it took time and patience to get all the details needed. Sometimes a mother could not be sure when her children had been born or precisely how many years ago. Paula was patient, compassionate, but firm with them, and our records reflected her careful work. Like Mrs. Tauber, Paula had come from Berlin where most of

her relatives had disappeared and been lost.

All three of the women on our staff had ample experience as refugees, and were aware that fear and suspicion of consequences could easily freeze a refugee into silence when asked for data about himself. They, like the people with whom they were dealing, well understood the dangers of giving the authorities too much information which could lead to "bad experiences".

An English Tommy, or Private in the British Army was our dirver for the old gray Hudson that was assigned to our office. Duncan B. Collier, the first of three successive British military drivers to be assigned during the lifetime of the UNRRA office, was a Glaswegian, a Salvation Army boy who was delighted to be in the Holy Land, and helping a humanitarian organization.

These six formed the nucleus of UNRRA's staff throughout the time the office existed in Jerusalem. Each with a different passport, they were as international a group as one could find. They were sensitive not only to the idealism of the organization, but to the predicament in which the refugees found themselves. This dedicated staff gave UNRRA a strength and objectivity in its work in this troubled country which were vital to its success there.

My own Canadian passport broadened our internationalism. Canadians have a special contribution to make in working

abroad. Our predominantly two-nation background (however lax we Canadians have been in not bringing the two together) is a constant reminder to us that there is more than one way of looking at things. Canadians don't have a strong nationalist feeling about themselves. If they had, they might be more prone to dictate to people abroad the best way to do things. Canada's geographical position on the map places her midway between the mother countries, France and Britain, and the rebelliious youngster United States. The fact that she has evolved as a country rather than undergone a revolution to become one, has meant that her citizens are commonly sensitive to the ways and the interests of others, and readily able to find their footing in working abroad. Whether UNRRA Headquarters considered this point in assigning me to Palestine is a matter of conjecture. It seemed to me they were more concerned as to whether they were assigning a man or a woman. There were some among those concerned with UNRRA's work who thought it a deliberate decision, and even called it wise, but it was never expressed as such, overtly or officially. My own feeling was that, as in so many of the vicissitudes of life, my being here was on that score purely happenstance.

Part of my joy at the prospect was the immense aesthetic pleasure in the city and the land of Palestine. The full beauty of Jerusalem is not apparent from most of the main roads approaching the city from afar. Only from the short local road on the Mount of Olives does one find a panorama to

make one stop and study and enjoy it. From there one sees the walls and buildings of the Old City and the growth of the new beyond spread out like an oriental carpet with mosques, minarets and towers as accents in the design. Many of the cities in this part of the world have souks and bazaars that have been in existence for years and still form a main section of the city. But none except Jerusalem has the walled outline and buildings, a core, giving a glimpse of how the small early city looked. Historically the city goes back to much earlier days than its walls. Nevertheless, with the possible exception of Aleppo, the portrayal of history in the clustering of buildings is much more evident in Jerusalem than in any other city in the whole area.

The British were fully appreciative of the historic and architectural beauty of the city. It was their aim to restore and enhance the Old City, a point on which all factions in the area could agree. They designated a surrounding area to be kept open with grass and trees. The natural skyline with its views of the opalescent round-topped hills so unique and characteristic of this area was to be visible and preserved insofar as it was possible. The city walls were to be repaired, and the break between Jaffa Gate and the Citadel, deliberately made so that the German Emperor could enter on horseback in 1898, was to be filled in. There were ordinances on construction. All new buildings were to be made of stone, a restriction placed on the Old City as well as the New. This

meant that the stone used came from the quarries in the nearby hills which was a creamy rose colour and made its own indigenous contribution to the warmth and loveliness of the city.

Historically Jerusalem was a caravan city, an important link connecting Asia Minor and the East with Europe and the Mediterranean lands. It had become home for people of many and diverse backgrounds. As a religious center of three world faiths, it attracted Moslems, Jews, and Christians, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Armenian, Abyssinian, Latin Catholic, Protestant or other. As a religious and cultural center it was a repository of treasures and its future should emphasize, so the British believed and planned, its historical, religious and cultural focus. Business, government and commercial activities should be kept under controls, for the character of the city meant that it was not suited for heavy, nor indeed light industry except crafts, pottery and tiles, jewelry and so forth. The Armenian tile factory in Jerusalem produced street signs in three languages for use in the Old City.

In the mid forties there were 30,000 people living in the Old City - in stone buildings of old fashioned higgledy piggledy design within the city walls. The city had begun to insist on drains and sewage installations, on electricity being installed in the old town so there were dangling single electric light bulbs as a first evidence. For the most part it was a maze of side alleys, steps, staircases, archways,

turning,window boxes, half arches, of cobblestones, congested buildings and crowds of people in all the variety of the different quarters, Arab, Armenian, Jewish, Greek, Syrian, Abyssinian, and so on.

Anyone who has watched Arab boys race up or down the cobblestone passageways has marvelled how sure-footed, fast, free movement is possible in so congested a place. Streets and alleys become their playing field and they know every stone and hazard as though it were built for play alone. Watching their exuberant chase, one became conscious of the depth and perspective their activity gave the vistas of the narrow streets and passageways. Like other cities built for travel on foot or on muleback, there was no room here except for people and this gave it the quality of being alive and dynamic.

To wander through the new city was to return to an urban atmosphere and scene familiar in other cities elsewhere. Streets were wider with sidewalks. Buildings were most often between two and four storeys in height. Yet the interesting thing is that the variety in building still held, reflecting the great variety in the backgrounds of the people. To enter an apartment house, hotel, or restaurant or cafe in the new Jerusalem of those days was to step into the surroundings of a place in Vienna, or Warsaw, or Prague. Although typical Arab architecture, three arches and a verandah, was still commonplace in and around Beirut, only a few examples could still be found among residences in Jerusalem. Here the influx of new-

comers was already replacing history with hastily thrown up cement block buildings, which if they had any characteristic style belonged to other cities and countries rather than this one.

Government buildings, if built in recent years, conformed to the regulations already described, and were handsome in their simplicity and in the texture and colour of the stone. The archeological museum was one of the city's finest buildings, as was the Y.M.C.A. built by an American philanthropist from New Jersey, and the High Commissioner's residence on a hilltop outside the city, sometimes known as the "Hill of Evil Counsel". The Kingsway, a circular street with modern buildings built for Jewish interests, principally the Jewish Agency for Palestine, was good looking, but all too often buildings were being thrown up in a hurry without consideration of their part in the total picture. The separate quarters or suburbs of the expanding Jerusalem demanded extensive exploring. They were each different from the other and usually known as the German quarter, or the French, and so on.

It was in this heterogenous and mixed community that my assignment with UNRRA found me. The prospect of getting to know Jerusalem and its people was for me an unusually enticing one. How would I find time for all the exploring I wanted to do?

CHAPTER III

Our First Priorities: The Greek and Polish Refugees.

As the German invasion of the Greek peninsula developed in 1941, Greeks from mainland towns and villages and from the islands got into their caiques and made night trips across the Aegean Sea to Turkey. Although this was but a few years after the exchange of Greeks and Turks at Thrace, the refugees at present fleeing their homeland knew they would not be turned back as they crept ashore into Turkey. The British Army met them with rations and blankets and without much delay they began their long trek east across Turkey's Taurus mountains and south through Syria to Lebanon and Palestine.

Others took the more traditional route into the Middle East, and by sailing across the Mediterranean to Alexandria, they joined a sizeable number of Greeks long since established and contributing to the urban communities of Egypt. Indeed the very strength of the Greek community in Egypt was a factor in the antagonism that later developed against them as Egypt sought its feedom from foreign domination.

As the war went on, then, the two-pronged tide of Greek refugees settled into UNRRA camps in Egypt, into the

monasteries and convents of the Greek Orthodox church in Palestine or into huts up through the mountains and hills of Lebanon. Some 9,000 were housed in Nuseirat, the big refugee camp in southern Palestine. They included a sizeable number of Sephardic Jews from Salonica. The fact that they were not Zionists subsequently became a stumbling block for them.

We knew that the Greeks would be the largest group of refugees the Jerusalem office would have to handle. After all, Greece was a middle east country within comparatively easy travelling distance, and its people knew that with the countries of the West in control, British in Palestine, French in Syria and Lebanon, help would be more likely to come by, than without the outsiders. Policies and practices would be based on compassion but the countries of the west also had the wherewithall to make life possible for the outsiders. For the most part refugees were a rural peasant group, who had fled from the war and who had no other idea but that they would return to their fields and villages as soon as circumstances would allow.

So the Greeks in Nuseirat camp were cared for by a staff under the department of camps at UNRRA's Headquarters in Cairo. For the rest, who were "free-living" in Palestine and Lebanon, the office in Jerusalem was to carry the responsibility. If care were needed, they were to be referred to Nuseirat. Since UNRRA's charter made no provision for individ-

ual cash grants as a way of taking care of people, the Jerusalem office was geared only to arranging for final movement of eligible refugees through repatriation.

Repatriation was a word with special significance in Palestine. Whereas UNRRA's charter authorized its work in repatriating people if that was their wish, to their country of birth or residence from which the war had caused their removal, an effort was being made in Palestine to classify anyone who came to live in the Jewish national home as being repatriated. UNRRA abided by standard nomenclature to make its work intelligible on the international scene.

In Lebanon the Greeks lived in small huts of stone and clay scattered throughout the terraced hills and mountains. The largest group lived in Aley at the top of the long hill leading out of Beirut towards Baalbeck, in the anti Lebanon hills, and on to Damascus. In the main, those Greek refugees remaining in Lebanon clustered together in tiny huts on the western flank of the mountainous country. The mists in the valleys shrouded their presence and over the years, they seemed to settle in as though it were home to them. They cultivated the terraced plots of land to add to their food, acquired chickens and goats, and lived a simple existence with diminishing hopes of anything regular and stable as employment. Their titular head was the president of the Greek Red Cross, an elderly doctor, who lived near

the foot of the road to Aley as though to screen those that came or went. The doctor depended upon his two pretty daughters as interpreters. They each had five languages, (Greek, English, Arabic, French, and Turkish or Armenian), while the old man stuck to his Greek.

The bulk of those families living in Palestine were housed in one or other of the Greek Orthodox establishments scattered throughout the country. Almost always these big, gaunt, old buildings occupied a slope on a hill with a beautiful view of the biblical hills. Their courtyards were drenched in sunlight in season. Though clean, bare, spacious and solid in construction, they were drafty, cold quarters in winter. The people had few belongings. They prepared their food on primitive family stoves, or ate on a communal basis as provided for the monks or nuns themselves. The Convent of the Holy Cross, a high-walled three storeyed old stone pile on the outskirts of Jerusalem housed some 300 Greeks. The hilltop convent in Bethlehem had 100, that at Bethany some sixty-odd. Other smaller institutions dotted over Palestine sheltered smaller clusters of families.

It was to these hostels that the staff from UNRRA's Jerusalem office came to register the families, getting proof of citizenship, place of residence within Greece and so on in preparation for their permission to re-enter Greece and return home. Although the Ministry of Social Welfare of the

the foot of the road to him as Carmel is seven miles and, more or less. The doctor depended upon his two pretty daughters as interpreters. They each had five languages (Greek, English, Arabic, French, and Turkish or Armenian), while one old man stuck to his Greek.

The bulk of these families living in Palestine were located in one or other of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchates scattered throughout the country. Almost without exception, their village buildings occupied a slope on a hill with a breath-ing view of the biblical hills. These courtyards were [illegible] in [illegible] in season. Though clean, bare, spacious and solid in construction, they were drafty, with water in cisterns. The people had few belongings. They received their food on a ration family basis, or ate on a communal basis as needed for the sick or more dependent. The [illegible] of the [illegible], a [illegible] three [illegible] on the thousands of destitute Arabs, were all Greeks. The [illegible] in Palestine and [illegible] no [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] Palestine [illegible] [illegible] of families.

It was my [illegible] that we could [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] the families, [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible] which [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] for their [illegible] to [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible]. [illegible] the [illegible] of [illegible] of [illegible]

Mandate Government had enrolled the refugees, there were others who came to the Jerusalem office requesting repatriation who were not counted as refugees because they held "certificates of immigration" which it seemed prevented them from being counted as refugees. This was a sizeable group living mostly in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv or Petah Tikva, though the majority had been in Nuseirat Camp on their arrival in Palestine. There the Jewish Agency representatives had given them these certificates and removed them from the camp. Since the document was in Hebrew and English, neither language familiar to the holder, and since there had been a lack of interpreting what it all meant, these Greek Jews found themselves transformed from refugees into immigrants without their being aware of it. "We don't speak the language, we never heard of Zionism till we came here, we want to go home."

It was at this point that I called on the help of Marjory Holland, the able librarian at the YMCA. She had developed the finest circulating library in the middle east, and was competent in helping me find documentation and background on Palestine certificates, a subject of considerable history and interest, to say nothing of controversy. Suffice it to say that I learned that Britain's last white paper had allowed for 200,000 immigrants thus registered by the Jewish Agency to enter, but that it was envisaged that the holders could and would make their own decision in regard

to repatriation when the hostilities ceased. It was thought that the estimated number desiring return might run as high as 75%.

It was clear that UNRRA was on legal grounds for moving any who held such certificates, but yet wished to return. As registration for the wider group continued, we listed those with certificates and although disclosure of their interest in leaving Palestine to neighbours in their communities worked a real hardship on those frank enough to admit it, our list grew steadily longer as the weeks went by. Histradut, the big Jewish labour organization, immediately blacklisted any Jew wanting to leave Palestine and it was literally impossible for such people to have work anywhere in the country. They were for the most part an urban group. They had lived in Salonica in the north of Greece. Merchants, craftsmen, entrepreneurs, many had held positions of responsibility in their communities and claimed they'd never felt discrimination until they came to Palestine and into contact with the Jewish Agency. Some were very bitter about this.

One of the largest groups of refugees throughout all of the Middle East and indeed east and south to a much wider area, was that from Poland. Both Christian and Jewish, the Poles dominated the displaced persons picture throughout the area, except in Egypt. The biggest influx came as a result of the Amnesty the Soviets granted them in 1941. To

quote from "The Displacement of Population in Europe" by Eugene M. Kulischer, International Labour Office, Montreal, 1943.

"In the fall of 1941, following an agreement between the Soviet Union and the Polish Government in exile, 348,000 Poles who were in internment camps were released and allowed to join the newly formed Polish Army. In 1942 75,500 Poles crossed from Russia into Iran, where the Polish army numbered 100,000 at the beginning of 1943. According to the American Red Cross 37,570 civilians also found their way along the shores of the Caspian into Iran". Among the Poles who had made this trek south from the concentration camps and prisons of the Soviet into Persia, were some who eventually came to our office in Jerusalem. The harrowing stories they had to tell of conditions en route were beyond belief. To be sure they were bound for a warmer climate, but the endurance required of them as they walked the northern stretches in winter months was very great.

The struggle for food and water, inadequate clothing that wore out on the way, ill health for most of them since prison life had already taken its toll, it was extraordinary that people could endure such hardship and eventually arrive in Persia to which they had looked as their goal, because of the temperate climate and the substantial national army already there. This flight or indeed these flights with many women and children among them have to my knowledge never been

fully documented, but individuals who experienced them said that the hardships and suffering of a people already weakened by prison life were incredible. The terrain alone offered problems. The changing climate and the lack of food meant the loss of people through exhaustion and hunger enroute. In any event, when the refugees arrived in Persia, the British army gave them emergency care, showers and a delousing, rations and blankets, and a chance to catch their breath, so to speak, before they resumed their trek. Some stayed in Iran, others fanned out in all directions. Some came to Palestine and then Lebanon, a few to Egypt, 30,000 to East Africa; and 7,000 found their temporary homes as far away as India.

The Poles proved themselves more resourceful than the Greeks at settling in. They secured space of any sort they could find, and turned it into temporary homes for themselves. They also sought out premises that could be used as workrooms, for cottage industries, or as classrooms for their children to be taught by Polish teachers of whatever qualification from among the refugee group. Typical of this national group was that they got organized to provide for their own confort and welfare, their own church and association, Dom Polski in Jerusalem Old City provided a centre for Polish people in the city, but throughout the towns of Palestine and Lebanon one could often find a nucleus of Polish interests established and asserting itself in the community.

In 1946, Iran lowered the boom on the group remaining fully documented, but individuals who experienced them said that the hardships and suffering of a people already weakened by prison life were incredible. The terrain alone offered problems. The changing climate and the lack of food meant the loss of people through exhaustion and sudden sickness. In any event, when the refugees arrived in Persia, the British army gave them emergency care, shelter, and clothing, rations and blankets, and a chance to catch their breath, so to speak, before they resumed their trek. Some stayed in Iran, others fanned out in all directions. Some came to Palestine and then Lebanon, a few to Egypt, 18,000 to East Africa, and 7,000 found their temporary homes as far away as India.

The Poles proved themselves more resourceful than the Greeks at settling in. They secured space in any form they could find, and turned it into temporary homes for themselves. They also sought out premises that could be used as warehouses, for cottage industries, or as classrooms for their children to be taught by Polish teachers of whatever qualification from among the refugee group. Typical of this national group was that they got organized to provide for their own comfort and welfare, their own church and recreation, was typical in Lebanon the camp provided a centre for Polish people in the city, but throughout the whole of Palestine and Lebanon the could serve as a nucleus of Polish interests established and asserting itself in the community.

In 1946, Iran launched its case on the Greek resolution there by giving them notice to leave. In this emergency, the British secured Lebanon's permission for up to four thousand of them to go to Lebanon on the understanding that the U.K. would give them a monthly grant enough for them to manage. In the meantime the London Poles were gratuitously inflicting their political guidance on most "over-seas" Poles by urging them not to go home. Intermittently in 1946 and 1947, however, there would be chances to be moved home through UNRRA's arrangements in Egypt. Invariably a few more families would pack up and go. As these opportunities opened up, I would make the trip to Beirut and on up into the hills to search out every group and offer them this chance. Some of the old army officers or their leaders would bring them together in a house or hall or wherever a meeting could be accommodated. My Polish interpreter would explain what I'd come to tell them. They would listen in silence and finally the major, or whoever was their appointed leader would say they preferred to stay on here rather than to return. In one of these villages some Poles gave us trouble. They had a half mad woman, a fanatic to whom they fed a number of statements about the communists in Poland. Midway through our meeting she would stride up and down the room waving her arms and shouting in Polish. No one would touch her, purportedly for fear of making things worse. My co-worker, Paula Halpern, called this a "Polish plotsky." Whatever it was, we had to find another way of reaching the group in this village. UNRRA's charter made our role

very clear. People were to be given the opportunity to go home or to stay, and there we stopped.

Almost any group of refugees includes such peasant people, sometimes illiterate, almost without exception apolitical, who would obviously have a long and difficult time in a new country, but would readjust easily if they were to return to their own land. These are the people for whom communism had realized the most improvements (although this is not something that can be said nor easily believed outside the communist world). At this level in society repatriation has much to offer people, more than the unknowns of a foreign culture. But it is precisely these people of whom the political leaders among the refugee group as a whole make use to develop their cause and posture. Both the Czech and Polish refugees had political reasons for coming to Palestine, and both groups knew we dealt with the new leadership in their countries to secure admission for their return, if they asked us for help in returning home. If officials of the former government in their countries were established in Palestine, we were in touch with them on a courtesy basis, although they knew, as we did, that we had to deal with their successors to get visas for re-entry.

One of the most helpful Polish individuals was Mr. Kazimierz Grzybowski, a deputy director in the department of social welfare of the Palestine government, in charge of Polish

Affairs. Himself a refugee to U. K. from Poland he was recruited there for the post in the mandate government. He was not Jewish but his knowledge of his fellow Poles, be they"London Poles" or communist, was sometimes very helpful to us. He was not a communist yet his contact with the old line Polish officials here in Palestine was very limited, much more so than ours because he had no need for their help, as we by contrast occasionally did, although our visits became less frequent as time went by. In February 1946 I went to the Polish consulate to have lunch with the Consul General, representing the old government, Mr. Alexsky Wdjiekonski, a tall gaunt grey-haired man. He spoke little English but his other guest, a young married woman, served as interpreter and he showed me photographs and textiles from Poland. To quote from my journal: "We had a delicate and delicious lunch, still about the best meal I've had in Jerusalem, at a formally set round table in a tall gaunt room. Our halting and repeated talk did not melt to be smooth flowing and unconscious in spite of the good sauterne and the Vodka. The size and gloom of the room, the quietness of the suburb, and the depression which seemed to hang over the consulate as its political strength ebbed out from under it, these and the raw February day outdoors, touched the occasion to one of sadness and hopelessness. As I left, Mr. Wdjiskonski came out into the stony garden in front, having cloaked himself in a long black cape, he mosied about peering at the occasional bloom that tried desperately

to brighten the day. I crossed the stony threshold out into Nablus road down toward the Mosque and home as he shut the barred gate in the stone fence and waved a wan goodbye to me.

Today (January 31, 1947) I attended his funeral, held at the big Byzantine styled Dominican Convent in Nablus road. His flag-draped coffin mounted high in the centre nave flanked with flowers, candles and tin helmeted Polish military with muskets. The church was packed, all the Jerusalem Polish refugees, all the local Polish military, the Consular corps, and the church dignitaries. Masses over, the procession moved out into the road. A white horse pulled the glass encased hearse, the priests and choir boys and men ahead, chief mourners next and consular corps following. Mr. Robert Graves of Labour, Mr. Thompson of the Secretariat with Mr. Lionel Pinkerton for U.S.A. Then the consuls of Iraq and Saudi Arabia, the Hashemite-Wahabi schism forgotten, the Saudi in beautiful black broadcloth robe and white embroidered kaffieh. Then Mr. Anton Novak, Consul General for the Czechoslovak Republic and I. The Egyptian, the Belgian, the French, the Lebanese and all the procession of military and civilian Poles, a procession extending for "miles". We walked Nablus road back to St. Paul's Road past Barclays Bank down to Manillah road, past Jaffa Gate and up to the Christian cemetery on Mount Zion.

His going, and he has suffered badly from cancer, seems symbolic of his old Polish Government, and though

he's served it in German cities, in Sofia, in Istanbul and here, it seems fitting that he should die in this Holy City, this city of feuds that lack solutions."

The Czechoslovak refugees, a smaller group than either the Greeks or the Poles rented apartments, rooms, or whatever they could find in the towns or cities, but unlike the Poles directed their interests toward their own individual arrangements, rather than for the group as a whole. They tried to adapt themselves, to find work and to be self-reliant. They seemed to us a "low profile" group, unobtrusive, and sometimes very helpful. Dr. Sidler became a good friend of our office through this willingness to help not only Czech but any refugees that needed medical attention. He made a very real contribution to our work.

CHAPTER IV

Palestine Dilemmas: The Refugee problem becomes politicized.

The struggle for the Jewish state was everywhere around us. Even though the Balfour Declaration providing for a Jewish national home was written in 1917, and enacted by the British Parliament in 1920, the acceptance of the document by one of the two principal people concerned, the Arabs residing in the area, was anything but compliant. The fact that they had not been consulted on the disposition of their lands

and homes meant they felt themselves indeed betrayed.

The record shows Britain tried to be as evenhanded as could be, but as time moved on, the Zionist pressures from the United States replaced the more experienced, more moderate Zionist leadership in Britain; and it was plain that Britain's attempts at fairness to both groups Arabs and Jews, was pushing her into an untenable position.

Adequately to describe the background of this most complicated conflict would take volumes and indeed there are already many studies and books on the subject. This is not the place for a political record, even had I the competence. However, insofar as the situation in the country affected our work, it is perhaps necessary to sketch the contemporary developments which had to be considered in planning the work UNRRA had to do.

After the break-up of the Ottoman Empire following the first World War, the League of Nations gave the Mandate for Palestine and Transjordan to the British, and that for Syria and Lebanon to the French. Independence had since come through negotiations for both Lebanon and Syria in 1943, whereas the Palestine Arabs' pleas for independence went unheeded. The Arab protest at not receiving independence grew to violence and terrorism during the period between the world wars, and with the increase in the number of Jews arriving, it became clear that other plans were being developed for the land the

Arabs had considered would be their state. The expanding holocaust destroying the Jews in Europe increased the Jewish pressure on both Britain and its secretariat in Palestine, and Arabs and Jews both resorted to terrorism and violence. The Jews[1] felt that the British White Paper and quotas might placate the Arabs, but was not a solution for Jewry. In their view, the floodgates should be opened immediately for their people to come. No one should be denied entry. They used the weapons and the training some of them had received in the British army buttressed by the methods they had learned from the German concentration camps. Their violence and terrorism through the Stern Gang and the Irgun Zwei Leumi far surpassed the primitive measures of the Arabs, and wreaked havoc all over the country. Sometimes it was difficult for those of us neither Jewish nor Arab who were separate from the mainstream of life in Palestine to know immediately which group had committed today's act of violence. Part of the sophistication of the Jewish approach was that they sometimes made it appear that their own acts had been committed by Arabs. Then too, they knew the value of the grapevine and concocted rumours designed to undermine morale or to shove the British in to giving up their leadership in Palestine.

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[1] The use of the word "Jewish" was much more general within Palestine at this time in history than it has been since then. It was assumed that all Jews would come to Palestine, or want to come, and that therefore all Jews were Zionists. It was only when this was proved not true that the words had more restricted meanings, and were not interchangeable.

The reactions to Zionist terrorism were revealing. German Jews in Palestine, some of whom had been here since World War I and before, deplored such methods. They knew that traditionally and historically the Arabs were tolerant and compassionate towards others, their Semitic brothers the Jews included. Jews long resident in Palestine knew that destroying the relationship between the two communities meant the beginning of a long period of hostility and turmoil, for they knew how long a Semitic feud could last. The Rector of St. George's Anglican Cathedral, out the Damascus Road, the Rev. Campbell McInnes a long-term resident of Palestine, had come to know the various groups that made up its mixed population. In illustration of how hostilities could persist, he spoke of an Arab who had sold part of his orange grove to a Jew some twenty years earlier, and was on this account still ostracized by the Arab people as being a traitor, even though the shooting of one of his sons some twelve years before was supposed to have settled the dispute.

The Rector spoke of growing Jewish pressure to acquire land or property in or around Jerusalem. There were intermittent phone calls or inquiries to learn of places for sale. Such were the number of calls that it came to be viewed as a running campaign. It was quite evident that land in and around Jerusalem was sought after and deemed the most precious treasure, in the Jewish view, in all of Palestine. It mattered

not at all that the Christians and Moslems might have the same feelings. They, the Jews, would not rest till they possessed it, old city as well as new, and if they ever acquired it, the world would have to relinquish any other claim, because of their almost fierce belief that it was theirs, first, last and always. Indeed, they saw to it that deeds acquired with the purchase of land in Jerusalem by Jews, forbade sale to any but Jews.

It was said in Palestine that historically the Jews and Arabs had lived together amicably for centuries. Jews long resident here vouched for this state of affairs and some among them were strongly anti-Zionist. If the newly arrived Jews had realized the prevalence of this attitude and been willing to accept it, rather than feeling superior to it, they could have saved themselves from the growing hatred of the Arabs. Jewish social work agencies in the west have a reputation for high standards of professional work, for good relationships within their communities and society. Had they, the newcomers to Palestine, seen fit to use some of this expertise, knowledge, skill, and goodwill they could have laid the ground for acceptance and cooperation. There were certainly instances of open tolerance on the part of individuals in both groups, but the majority of Jews treated the Arabs with arrogance and superiority. Too often, it seemed, the Jews were permissive in letting an aggressive member of their group represent their interests.

The Arabs have the instincts and intuitions of a simple country people. They know when they are being fooled, though they may not disclose it. They knew for isntance when recently a grenade was thrown at the Baghdad Synagogue door, that it was not an Arab bomb, but part of the Jewish campaign to stir the Jewish community there to leave Iraq and come to Palestine.

The Arabs respond to life and people with a sense of humour and a wonderful repertoire of gestures. If their reactions are not as logical as those of westerners, they are surely spontaneous and natural. One day Mohammed told me that he was leaving UNRRA's employ because he was going to be married, and such an important occasion warranted his prolonged and complete attention. With the logic of a westerner I argued this was the time for him to keep his work and regular pay, and that he should take a vacation. He said his decision was final, and he left us. About a month later he was on our doorstep ready to be hired again, with which idea we complied.

At the time that UNRRA opened its office in Jerusalem early in 1945, the British White Paper authorized the mandate secretariat to accept 200,000 Jews from the countries involved in the war in Europe. Certificates in English and Hebrew were to be issued and used for entry into Palestine, and as identification within the country. On the cessation of hostilities,

the White Paper stated that holders of these certificates could choose between returning to their countries of birth or former residence, or being counted as immigrants to Palestine and remaining there.

The leaders in each national group of Christian refugees, who knew from our November investigation that UNRRA might come to Jerusalem to help them, ~~were~~ had been informed when the office opened. This was all that was necessary to begin a stream of people coming on foot, by public bus, or train to learn of possibilities open to them and to register. We learned as the weeks and months went by, that it served to notify Jewish people as well. The war was still going on in Europe as we began this work, and seeveral weeks of registering gave us a caseload of substantial numbers.

All of us on the UNRRA staff recognized that the records and documentation we were making on each refugee who came to us was confidential and private; that it was our duty to see that it remained so. Beyond that there was UNRRA's view: the need to avoid publicity and to keep the work humanitarian rather than political. It came to be recognized, in Palestine particularly, that the United Nations was not interested in giving information to the press. Although we were asked once or twice to report on our work in general in the local government radio programmes, few specifics were known of the dimensions of our work or the people affected, and we tried to see to it that that continued to be the case.

As the work developed it was clear, however, that our role in Palestine at this historic time was becoming more and more an opportunity to help the Jewish people who wished to leave this country to return home. Since this was in direct opposition to the whole Zionist aim of holding every Jew here, to achieve a head count large enough to claim a national home, it was necessary for our work to be done not only with meticulous care as to documenting each person, but as unobtrusively as possible in order to avoid reprisals against Jews registering to leave, and to avoid antagonism from those Jews who did not agree with UNRRA's position. Morning after morning we turned away reporters and press people who stood in our doorway hoping for a story. Not until late in 1947, at the time of our last move of Austrians, with a remnant of Czechs and Poles, did the cameramen and reporters get the information they desired to make a story for their papers back home. The freedom of choice, to go or to stay, with which hundreds of Jewish people in Palestine came to ask UNRRA's help would not have existed if our work had been allowed to become a political issue, with pressures building to impede if not to halt the exodus of those Jews wishing removal. This freedom of choice was available to people here only through UNRRA's presence.

October 25, 1945. The Review of the Palestine Press today quotes an Arab paper which says its quoting figures issued by the Vaad Leumi, Jewish Agency, that there are 150,000 Jews who won't change their passports for Palestinian ones - in other

words won't take out citizenship. 56,000 are supposed to be Polish, 17,000 are said to be German, 10,000 from the Yemen and so on.

Since January 1st, 1946, there's been a boycott by the Arabs of Jewish goods. Many are following it carefully, not buying Hebrew merchandise. The Jewish press however boasts that the boycott has not caused Ibn Saud to cancel his order for Jewish furniture. In retaliation, Arab labour has been thrown out of work when employed by Jewish employers. It is said there isn't anything that one can't buy from the Arabs, except the things that used to be imported from Europe. It is perfectly natural that the Hebrew industry should be repeating what it learned at home. You can hear Jews say there's nothing here characteristically Jewish except the language, everything is copied from somewhere or somebody else. Settlements and cooperatives from Russia and Scandinavia, manufactured goods as in Europe or America, architecture international as anywhere else, with little original design. Yet others say one of the main reasons for establishing a national home, is to give pure Hebrewism a chance to express itself. There are already, within the Jewish communities here, arguments and discussions as to how much power and control religious groups either Orthodox or reformed should have. To some people religious influence should be a deliberate deletion. There is a belief among Jews that if a Jewish state should come into existence nobody would want their children educated in Hebrew,

educated for a ghetto existence, they would have to be sent to Europe or America to be educated to live in the modern world."

It was I suppose entirely natural that speculation and intellectualizing should be prevalent in those days. Argument and controversy come naturally to the Jewish people and whatever their position on Zionism, feelings ran pretty deep and events those days provoked obsession with the subject, compulsive talk, almost wrangling about it.

"One of UNRRA's most admired workers was a staff member in Nuseirat camp in southern Palestine, Pessa Polasky was a young woman from Cincinnati employed by Haddasa and assigned by UNRRA to be in charge of the social work in this big camp for thousands of Greeks. She was one of our real pros, able and dedicated to the work. When her tour of duty in Nuseirat was done and Pessa was preparing to go home, she came up to Jerusalem and to our office with but one thought in mind. She said she wanted to talk to the "Jewish Agency for Palestine" about the visits their representatives made to Nuseirat. Their distributing of certificates to Jewish refugees without proper interpretation of what they actually were disturbed her. The Jewish people among the Greeks were mostly Sephardics from Salonika in the north of Greece. They spoke neither Hebrew nor English, the languages on the certificates, yet they were

made to sign as though they did. Pessa was sure that the Agency people in Jerusalem were unaware of what was happening, that the organization had more humanitarian principles than their representatives were showing, and that they would be as distressed as she was if they knew the coercion that was being used. She called the Agency and made her appointment to see them next day. She did so and came back to our office in a depressed and discouraged state of mind. She said they admitted quite frankly at the Jewish Agency that they were not the slightest bit interested in social work, or in the humanitarian point of view. The political issues were to them the important ones at this time of crisis, and they had no time for any others. This was all Pessa would say. But her ruminating silence made me believe she was sheltering the agency from worse comment and criticism purely through her devoted loyalty to her people. She left Palestine disillusioned and depressed."

"It was certainly clear to all Jews who came to our office seeking return to their homeland that here in Palestine they were being used as political pawns, to build up the head count on which the securing of a Jewish National Home was dependent. When the Jewish Agency told them to "just wait till UNRRA has gone, and then we will help you", some of the people who had been here long enough responded, "You never helped us before, how can we believe you would then." Deprived of work, it was difficult for these people to manage, and their pressure

on the UNRRA office to move them soon and quickly became a daily problem for us to handle.

This was especially the case when the Christian Greeks began to get restless, complaining that we were slow in getting them moved home. We had a constant flow of representatives from the convents and monasteries coming to ask when they would be leaving for home. In time we had to learn how to handle demonstrations, and for a number of weeks our work was encumbered with individual and group counselling, trying to help people understand they must be patient. After all, among these peasant refugees, there was little exposure to the press and radio, little understanding that submarine warfare had decimated the ships afloat, that the turn around from military to civilian needs took time. The Cairo Movements Office kept on investigating possibilities for us, but we learned it might be months before they would determine our priority or lack of it.

One morning somebody in the office spotted a procession coming over the hill and down towards our building. It was a swarm of people in blues, and we could tell even at a distance that they were the Greeks from the Convent of the Holy Cross about three hundred men and women occupying the whole road and sidewalks, and looking very formidable when one could guess what they'd come for. They wanted to go home and were not prepared to believe us when we said we had no ship. Arrived at our building they stopped, with much excited chatter and

outbursts of shouting. Then they moved into the olive grove across the road and I was suddenly aware of what a rock pile that was. The crowd waited quietly however, while sixteen of their men crossed, came into our building and crowded into one of our rooms where George and I met them to discuss their problem. They simply did not or would not understand when we told them the lack of ships or "bottoms" was the only reason UNRRA had not moved them. We had no figures on wartime losses; we only knew that the military were in charge of priorities and assignments and that as soon as they could they would give us a ship and sailing date, or perhaps more than one. It was very difficult for them to accept this; they thought a United Nations request should be handled immediately. At long last they were convinced, or seemed to be, that we were not all-powerful in the situation and they left us. Within a half hour, the Greek Consul telephoned that he had a big demonstration of Greeks in front of his building. What was he to tell them? He accepted our statement that the lack of ships was delaying their repatriation, repeated it to them telling them they must have patience, and the crowd moved on. Another half hour or so passed and the American Consul General, Mr. Lionel Pinkerton, was on the phone. "Elizabeth, there are hundreds of Greeks in our front yard, they are standing on my pansies, they say they want to go home. What shall I tell them?" So they had a disappointing day, and this was not to be accepted and forgotten. They returned to the convent, but true to typical Greek reaction, the issue was kept alive with constant talk and ex-

citement. Once the Greeks got hold of an idea, they became compulsive and absorbed in it, usually until they accomplished what they wanted.

It was amid these mounting frustrations that our caseload began to include increasing numbers of European Jews who wished to be repatriated. They came from Tel-Aviv, Petah Tikvah, and a few more widely scattered localities (although more from urban areas than from Kibbutzim). They wanted to be repatriated to Greece,to the Czechoslovak Republic and Poland like the others enrolled here, but also to Austria, Italy, the Lowlands, Hungary, Roumania, France and even Germany. Right after the war ended in Europe we had a large influx of these people expecting us to move them home immediately. The office in Jerusalem was crowded every day. The matter of securing visas or clearances for return was handled in a variety of ways. If the country had a representative in Palestine these arrangements were fairly simple. But for Jewish applicants, because of the political implications, many national representatives found it necessary to get either general permission from their government for Jews wishing to return, or else individual permission, based on the information we compiled per person.

We had no success in securing visas for Roumanians. For others from Europe, the time consumed in getting permission for return was interminable; the Greek Consulate was the most conspicuous in its lack of willingness to help.

In a world where idealists hoped and believed that racial discrimination would end as a result of Hitler's horrendous treatment of Jewish people, it was discouraging to find that some members of the human race were singled out for special treatment in the regulations of their governments.

"October 27, 1945. We have had a lot of Hungarians in to see us recently. They are all Jewish, young single men 25 or younger, to 35. All eager to go home. Most are employed. Their stories are all similar. Authorities in Hungary deported great numbers of them as enforced labour to Yugoslavia. They escaped from the camps and with Tito's partisans' help escaped back to Russian zone and sometimes to Roumania, sometimes to Turkey. Jewish Agency representatives got hold of them, gave them Certificates to Palestine, told them that on these they could stay in Palestine till after the war and then return to Hungary. Mrs. Tauber talked to some today whose story was as above, and like similar ones I heard the other day. She was naturally pretty upset at the idea of any Jewish Agency representative using certificates so lightly, for she knows of course that they aren't transferrable and once used and relinquised they are lost. Besides she is still trying to believe that the Jewish Agency is a reputable humanitarian organization; and not political pure and simple. It's not interested in Zionism as a religious cause only as a national one. It's not interested in human beings as such, only in numbers for the attainment of a Jewish state. The fall of

Nazism and Fascism in Europe represents the 11th hour for the Yishud, and they are quite undertandably desperate to realize their statehood before this bogey of internationalism that's afoot changes world opinion toward them."

"One case today, a young woman born in Roumania, two children and her mother having come here from Italy 18 months ago. They lived with the woman's husband in Rome, till the Germans removed him, and as she thought took his life. Last month she heard from him, and now she is sorry she came to Palestine and wants to go back, and to Grenoble where her husband now works. She and the man who was her interpreter sat across the desk, I taking what notes I could get usefully from her limited papers, including those of her mother, a beautiful white-haired woman whose documents are marked with the purple stamp "Juive". Transferring lives to paper is a hazardous thing to do, they bank so much and there's sometimes such a slim chance of helping."

"A young woman prematurely grey, nervous, quick speaking. Born one hour from Czech border in Germany, speaks German, no Czech, Christian (for a cahnge). Went to Czechoslovakia as a child, got a Czech passport and eventually went to live or visit in Germany. Married a German Jew and when the baby was coming Hitler was on his ascent to power. She didn't want her child brought up in the Hitler pattern "with a knife at his belt" so she agreed to come with her husband to Palestine in

1934. By '39 they were separated by '41 divorced. She's spent some time in a concentration camp here her child is discriminated against as a Christian and as a German. She cant' get work because she's not Jewish. As I said she does not speak Czech and so despite a Czech identification card (her Czech passport was taken in exchange for a German one when she married and planned to leave Germany) the Czechoslovakian consulate will not give her a passport nor allow her to register for repatriation. But any way she destroys every suggestion made to her, the complaints, the bitterness tumbles out in broken English so fast I can't catch it all. Thinks this country has worse fascism than Germany ever knew, that the intolerance is beyond words, that she's lost the child's affection because they've turned him against her. She is in a bad state, needs help, real help, yet what can we do to begin things. And there are so many who come to us to ask for it.

CHAPTER V

The work in Lebanon.

"Our work in the Lebanon began with visits to the villages where the Greeks were living. Mud cottages with wood-burning stoves kept the mountain mists at bay, and were sufficiently similar to their own island homes to be acceptable to them for their sojurn here. The terraced hillsides

were not only more extensive in scope than any they'd known, but more fertile. The Greeks quickly adapted themselves to this kind of agriculture and added vines to have grapes for wine. The goats they introduced were not acceptable to the Lebanese, and there had to be a goat leader or a tether to keep them under control. By contrast the chickens wandered at will, and even the roads through village centers had the traffic menace of a meandering old hen. This part of the world has its share of beauty thought, and the curving roads that lead to the uplands or the hilltops are full of surprise vistas of some of the loveliest terracing to be found anywhere. The red soil and the umbrella pines dominate the picture as in a Cezanne painting of sothern France, but suddenly the Mediterranean comes into view and the character of the coastal areas loses its cosy, well cared for garden appearance, to something wilder, more wind-swept and rocky.

"There were Poles too, in many villages in the hills of Lebanon. Many of them had found their way from Persia after the Soviet amnesty in 1942, and the great trek south. There had been a Polish community in Beirut before this war and many of them found a good living there by producing goods that sold well amid French-trained appetites. The specialty shops of this cosmopolitan center were frequently presided over by a Polish lady who began her service to the customer by saying "Prosch." There had been a growing list of Polish

imports, too, among which Polish hams and sausages had priority. When UNRRA came to register the Polish refugees, all these people felt they should be counted as refugees too - those who had lived here many years as well as those who had come because of the war. Eligibility became a bit of a problem, and more particularly was this so when Iran gave notice that all Poles were to leave that country by a given date in 1946. Lebanon agreed to take not more than 4000 Poles, which covered also those then residing in Iraq, in view of the British offer to pay them small monthly grants until such time as they could find employment and become established, return home, or make their plans for joining relatives or friends elsewhere.

The work in Lebanon did not require a separate office, and I found it could be handled by a trip from Jerusalem once every month or five weeks with my files in the back of the car. It proved best to take the car rather than fly or to go by taxiseat - a popular means of moving about in much of the middle east of those days. Our refugees were so scattered that the car was essential to getting about quickly. On most visits I stayed at the St. George's Club on the waterfront in Beirut having become a member through friends. A swim before breakfast was possible there, and the small dining room provided tolerable food, and some companionship. One morning at breakfast, an Englishman across the dining room lowered his glasses and his newspaper to ask "Are you Miss

UNRRA Brown?" I allowed as how I might be, and his second question was, "Would you like to go to Afghanistan today?" When my answer was, "Of course, but as it happens I have work to do," we settled into a conversation to determine who might be willing to go with him. Friends the evening before had told him I might be interested. I mentioned the Stewart Dodds at the American University of Beirut who were currently entertaining an American woman who was a Methodist minister, and that it was just possible she might have the time and be interested in going, particularly if he suggested one or more of the young Dodds boys go too. Later I learned that that was exactly what happened, and that they had a wonderful three-week trip. Not like me to miss a chance like that - I never did get to Afghanistan.

I came to enjoy the trips to Beirut, and the work in a different society and culture to that in Palestine. I enjoyed it too, as poeple all over the Middle East have done for genrations, as a resort with cool mountain breezes and the refreshment of a wooded land. In a stunning location on the sea front with foothills and mountains behind it, Beirut was a cultural center and a sophisticated city, with much French influence, and a great deal of beauty in its unplanned layout."

Let me digress to explain about our transportation. A car assigned to the Jerusalem office, a comfortable old Hudson, proved itself by outlasting the life of the office and the rough roads in the Lebanese hills and Palestine.

It was given a military number and a British army private was assigned as driver. I have already mentioned Duncan Collier, a big Glasgow Tommy, blonde, handsome, full of fun and helpful, and the first of three drivers we had during our sojourn. He had been active in the Salvation Army at home, and each time I got in the car I was careful not to trip over his Bible. (Within three years, the danger of tripping came from tommy guns rather than a Bible. The driver now had an escort and each man had a gun.) It was plain that Collier was pleased with his assignment; he had not expected his service in the Middle East could possibly be with a welfare organization, and he entered into our work as supportively and enthusiastically as anyone could be. When his tour in the Middle East and the army was over, he was replaced by Jim Casey, whose Irish name belied his coming from a Welsh mining town. Jim's grandfather had emigrated from Ireland to find work in Nyrthyrydvil in the mines of Wales.

Jim was with us when we were enrolling the Poles in the Lebanon. I had employed five young Polish women and we were making the daily trip up the mountains of Lebanon to various centers where we spent the day registering the people. There was really nothing for Jim to do but wait out the day till we were finished and ready to drive back to Beirut. Idle and lacking the languages, his main occupation was drinking beer. How he got us down the mountainside, curve after curve with no barriers between us and the steep slopes below, is still a mystery. On one occasion we made the descent

safely by somemmiracle, only to find ourselves the object of a Beirut policeman's shrill whistle because we were headed the wrong way on a one way street. It was just after dark and homeward-bound traffic was heavy. Jim was beyond reading signs and furious he'd been told to stop; when the policeman asked for his license, he pulled it out of his pocket and shoved it under the policeman's chin as much as asking for a fight. The Policeman said we would have to go to the police station, and he with us. At his bidding the two girls in front moved over and the cop made a forth in the front seat. He directed Jim how to get there, and we set out to climb again, up one of the foothills behind Beirut. There was a babble of Polish conversation and discussion in the car; then finally the girls fell silent and one of them explained to me in English that the best way to handle the situation was for me to be aggressive about the treatment we had had, or to make some other complaint so that the police officer would have some counterbalance to offset our misdemeanor. The girls were emphatic! I must take the initiative and be aggressive or we would lose out. Finally we arrived in the walled courtyard of the police station, and the policemen led us across the cobblestone yard and into a large dimly lit lobby where a police officer presided at a high desk. As our policeman approached the desk he began talking Lebanese, I broke in with what I hoped was a show of anger and complained that it was humiliating for the United Nations Staff to be treated like delinquent youths and have a

policeman's screaming whistle directed at us in downtown Beirut. Couldn't he see that ours was a United Nations car and that our driver would not willingly drive the car against the Lebanese traffic directions. Having heard me out, the officer said he wanted to get the policeman's story. There followed a conversation in Arabic between them of some length. In the end the officer said that it was quite evident we had broken the law, and he would have to impound the car and lock us up overnight till a Judge could rule tomorrow on what was to be done about it. I said "I could not have that happen" and inwardly decided it was time to throw a bit of weight, so I asked to whom he would like to speak, the American Ambassador, or the British Ambassador, or would he tell me what was needed to help him and us. He could see by my card that I was responsible for these five employees, and in charge of the UNRRA programme not only in Lebanon but in Palestine as well, and that my Headquarters in Cairo would be distressed that the Lebanese police treated us this way. In the end he released us, as we helped him to see that our work in Lebanon was authorized by his own government, that Mr. Jean Hadji-Thoma, Chef du Control des Etrangers in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Lebanese government knew all about us. In a serious mood we listened to his warning and left the premises.

This experience was an upsetting one for Jim. We finished the week's work and he took me back to Jerusalem. I

spoke to the officer in his unit and he agreed to search out a more suitable young man. Within a short time Gordon Symmons replaced Jim. In the busy months that followed he proved himself to be a help to us all and to the office. One day I complimented him on the way he kept the car - solemnly he told me his father had taught him that if he took care of his car, it would take care of him. I got some attention too, I noticed. Gordon still writes me at Christmas time from his home near Bristol in England.

Sometimes I would make the trip to Beirut by taxi, or jitney as it should rightly have been called. One would buy a seat for the trip. George Nickolakis our Greek interpreter went with me on some occasions when our business was with the Greeks. It was a day's run from Jerusalem to Beirut, and the taxis timed these trips to allow an hour for lunch in Haifa. One time George and I were two of four passengers returning to Jerusalem, and as it turned out it was a congenial group. Grace Edwards from Milwaukee had resigned her job teaching at a school in Aleppo and was going to Jerusalem to see if she could find work there. Her subject was religion, and since this was her first trip to the Middle East, she was interested in seeing as much of the Holy Land as she could. The other passenger was Sheik Salman-el-Khalifa, the son of the Emir of the Bahrein Islands, who had made the trip to accompany a younger brother who just entered a private school in Beirut. The Sheik listened more than he talked though he had perfect English. It was a good day for the trip, with

with glimpses of the blue sea to the right, and the land and green hills as a beautiful backdrop most ofthe way. Arrived in Haifa, I asked Grace if she'd like to join George and me in going to Mrs. Anderman's restaurant. She was an English Jewess who served good food in a cool, big, comfortable dining room. I had seen to it that we were out of earshot of the Sheik but he came over to us and asked if we had decided on a place to eat. I told him there must be many in Haifa, perhaps he could suggest. We were thinking of going to a place run by a westerner, but perhaps he'd rather not. Where else could we go? He brushed all the rationalizing aside and said he'd like to go to any one we were thinking of. The four of us walked the several blocks, found the restaurant, went up the stairs and entered the crowded place. The staff, or at least the waiters, were entirely Arab, all dressed in long white galabiahs. As we entered, the eyes of every Arab were on the Sheik whose robes disclosed immediately to them whom they had as a customer. There was no time for a red carpet to be laid but everything else that could be done to please us was ensured. We had an excellent meal and the Sheik with the usual Arab generosity, was insistent on being our host."

Once in our own car we stopped for a soldier thumbing a ride, he leaned forward to search the car for an officer to whom he should pay his respects for the lift. As he did so, I opened the door towards him and the car door clipped him in the nose. He let out a stream of amused and amusing Irish talk.

"Well me nose ought to be able to take it; it's been three times broken while I was a boxer, but its not been hit recently as its too old I am to box." The car became alive with his chatter. On duty at the Acre prison where they have some six hundred inmates "crowded it is" but there'll be more room soon for we're hanging six this next week. We have everybody there Arabs, Jews, British, everybody, but mostly Arabs. There's one that was sought for a long time, a leader of the Arab revolt. Twenty-six murders to his record though not all by his own hand. He was sought the country over and every policeman knew his face from the photographs. So one day one of the policemen stepped into an orange grove to pick a couple of oranges, and there lay this man asleep under an orange tree, so he's to swing next week. The scaffolding's all set up, the executioner's been there many years, 100 £P a month he gets and all found. The other officers of the prison get good money too, 30 £P a month and all found. There's some Jewish political prisoners there, but most of them are Arabs doing terms for thefts."

On Friday I went with Mr. Watkinson the British Consul General in Beirut on a trip up into the hills to see the villages where the Polish refugees being brought into the Lebanon from Iran are going to live. Qazir on the coast toward Tripoli, and Bdedoun down the coast toward Haifa we did not visit. But we went north from Beirut on the Tripoli road, past the big cut where throughout the ages so many armies have landed - or defended the coast against landings. Nine different inscript-

ions are carved in the rocks on the hillside in Greek, in Latin, and some are indecipherable. There is a lovely little painted arched stone bridge built by the same Turkish Emir for whom Beiteddine was built. The road runs on through great banana plantations, vegetable farms, fruit orchards, fertile fields on good land, till we turn off up the hill on a side road which winds and climbs through Zouk Mikhail one of the little stone villages and on up and up past stone huts, and way-side shrines, past Aleppo pines, fig trees sprawling over dry stone walls, grapevines, an area now bereft of houses and their owners. Every where on either side above and below, the terracing that is the only means of finding a bit of level land. There is centuries of hand work in the terracing in this part of the world. The terraced vineyards on the Rhine are insignificant compared with those in Greece, which are slight compared with those in the Lebanon. In Palestine the hills slope more gradually, the soil is sand, and dry, "99% absorptive". In the Lebanon the hills are steep, and there is little space that's level enough to build a stone cottage, let alone have a field or area to cultivate, and so great tall hillsides, even mountainsides, are cross-hatched the whole way up and down with precision in stone edged terraces. Many by this time have no crop or plants to be seen in them. Many have mulberry trees, for Syria and the Lebanon have had such quantities of these trees, and of silk worms and silk that through the centuries the great brocade and silk business of Damascus

has grown and thrived and so we had damasks in silk before we ever had them in table linen. The road is sand and gravel and unpaved most of the way. Finally we rise to Adjeltoun beyond the Jesuit college which was the place the French university in Beirut began. Adjeltoun is scattered and perched high on the mountainside with a glorious panorama of heights and rolling hills before it, the arm of the Beirut peninsula stretching way out into the blue Mediterranian at the left and south. There are countless small red tiled roofed stone huts, a fair sized school which they hope to take over and the usual Catholic church. On down the road the paving begins where the residence of the Catholic patriarch is located. His interest in retaining the Christian majority in the Lebanon has assisted the Poles in getting an affirmative answer as to their acceptance into this country. They are of course largely Catholic and eventually they may settle in and become voters, so it is not only an economic project for the Lebanon but also a gesture by the majority in the country who find themselves in a minority in the government.

The Saturday afternoon trip to Asounieh, and to Beiteddine and back took so long that the Stewart-Millers insisted I stay over till Sunday to go on to Damascus. Dr. Stewart Miller is the director of the Mental Hospital and has a comfortable home on the grounds. I stayed with them and Collier went back into Beirut to the Salvation Army hostel. I found the Stewart-

Millers charming hosts and enjoyed the creature comforts of their lovely home. A well informed Scot, he told me many things of interest. ~~He told me many things of interest~~ about this part of the world, his account of how the hospital began was particularly interesting.

"An Englishman named Napier worked in Abyssinia as a government official or British representative, back in the 1880's. He had married the Ethiopian Premier's daughter and had eight children, when the nationalistic attitude there developed sufficiently that he had to leave. He moved up through Sudan, Egypt and Palestine to the Lebanon and on up into the hills where he settled and started two schools and a hospital, the former are still active: the hospital closed recently. After his wife died, he married a Syrian woman.

It bothered him to see mental cases kept in chains, that to him did not seem to be the way to treat such an unfortunate group, and that was the way they were treated all through this area at that time. So he got together a group of people he thought might be interested and help him promote the idea of a hospital for mental cases, and the idea took hold, he was appointed to go abroad to England, the continent and America to collect funds. Three days out at sea he got his first cheque £ 400, and his luck on his way continued till he came home with substantial funds. They bought an inn on the Damascus road and a large enough plot of land that additional buildings could be added and indeed still can be

added. Today it is a beautiful place with gardens and shrubbery, modern offices and residence quarters, picnic tables for families of patients to come and visit them. The old inn has twice been renovated and added to and makes the Director's (Miller's) offices and residence, big spacious rooms, terrace, verandah overlooking a pool and gardens and a view of Beirut harbour and the Mediterranean. Downstairs the old stone walks and arches, pavement and corridor are all still in the basement as they used to be in the main floor of the inn. Right beside the house the old dirt road to Damascus preserved across the end of the orchard given by the government to the hospital, formerly used by horse drawn vehicles and camel caravans that stopped at this inn, the first night stand on the way Beirut to Damascus.

Dr. Miller told me more of the history of the place than space allows here. In the first World War with food shortages acute and no relief in sight the Turkish authorities where more than good to them and kept them in flour and basic foods. The dead lined the roads in all villages, the ravages of war found their way on up into the hills and many patients were cared for at the hospital.

When war had seemed imminent he had asked families to take back their patient family members, to take them to the villages in the hills where they'd be safe and quiet. Thus he cut his population in the hospital considerably, and was able to help with war casualties.

This time at World War II he tried to avoid having French military take over. So he wrote the British Consul General offering part of the premises, two buildings, to be used by the Civil Administration as an air raid casualty station. "Your very generous offer" accepted, they came in and did quite a bit in preparation. Then came the French military who got their answer "so sorry! civilian authorities have taken it over." As the war progressed British military did come and the place was used as need prompted. Their guest book has a record of Australians, New Zealanders, British military 'visitors' and patients.

The Asfourieh Hospital for Mental Diseases in the Lebanon has a very good reputation throughout the whole of the Middle East, Dr. Miller wishes borders would open up and shipping and transportation develop because many of his paying patients came down from Bulgaria and Roumania as well as Turkey and Iran and Iraq and when he has a higher proportion of paying patients he can help more of those who can't pay.

CHAPTER VI

The Altounyan Family

One of the most interesting ethnic groups in this area was the Armenian, a people that had its strength in Syria where within the general population of 350,000 there were said

to be at least 100,000 Armenians. The majority of them centered around Aleppo, having come from the Village of Alexandretta on the coast when the Turks took it over. Of recent years they have crowded into the city. Many have work while the war lasts, but they know they will be without it once hostilities cease. As Christians in a Moslem country (a country that has recently secured its independence from Christian France and therefore restated its moslemism) they feel their future insecure, their prospects not good. In 1945 the USSR was offering repatriation to any of the Armenians that wanted to return to Soviet Armenia, and to Eravan its capital. It was said that about 60,000 might be moved but this was based on Soviet estimates rather than enrolment. How the moves were to be financed no one knew. Apparently the Soviet had chartered the Roumanian ship "SS Tripolitania" but no provision was made for food or service. Nevertheless a first flight of one thousand sailed from Beirut this past weekend. All available funds were used for this purpose, including a loan against a fund held in U.S.A. for the Armenians to purchase modern machinery for a new shoe making industry to be set up here in Syria. This repatriation project lacks leadership and organization, but the people being included are those with vocational skills. Whether further moves will be possible has not yet been disclosed, but the only way open to people to move to Eravan is by this means since Turkey will not allow any Armenian even transit through her country. Since for the most to be at least 500,000 Armenians. The majority of these refugees are around Aleppo, having come from the villages of Alexandretta on the coast when the French took it over. No matter where they have migrated from the start, they are [illegible] and well liked, and they know they will be without it more [illegible] means. As Christians in a Moslem country [illegible] they recently accepted for independence from [illegible] French, and those [illegible] they feel would [illegible] their prospects not good. In this the Armenian [illegible] population to say of the Armenians that moved to return to Soviet Armenia, and to survive its control. It was said that about 10,000 signed to enter but this was agreed by Soviet officials rather than enrollment. Now the [illegible] were to be [illegible] up one [illegible]. Apparently the Soviet had chartered the Norwegian ship "SS Transilvania" but as provisions were made for them by [illegible], nevertheless a first [illegible] of the [illegible] from Beirut this past summer. All available funds were used for this purpose, including a fund collected [illegible] in U.S.A. for the Armenians to purchase property and [illegible]. But a [illegible] to me [illegible] to Syria. This repatriation project [illegible] and organization, but the people taken included [illegible] those with some [illegible] ability. Whether further moves will be possible has not yet been disclosed, but the only way open to [illegible] to Soviet is by this route since Turkey will not allow any Armenian even transit through her country. Since for the same part the Armenians have lived in this area for decades, some were refugees of World War I, they are not eligible for UNRRA's assistance. Whether any successor organization would be authorized to assist them will remain to be seen. It may depend on reports coming back as to how these first repatriates fared in their country of origin.

I had a number of friends among the Armenian community, one family I got to know better than others, simply because UNRRA's work coincided with the Colonel's responsibility. My journal records a number of entries in regard to his enquiries about our work.

"Early in the life of the Jerusalem office, an officer from British military Headquarters, Colonel (Dr.) E. H. R. Altounyan, called on us. A rugged, big man with an enquiring and scrutinizing eye, he made only one trip to our office, but became the focal point for support and help in UNRRA's work in Palestine and indeed in the Middle East, The Altounyan family story is a record of substantial help to the Middle East, but in the end the importance to the new countries of affirming their national identity caused Turkey and then Syria to evict this fine old Armenian family, whose pioneer work in medicine had benefited people in a wide area for half a century and more."

"In the last century Dr.A. A. Altounyan, Col. E. H.R. Altounyan's father, was educated at the University of

Constantionople's School of Medicine. Upon becoming a doctor, he set up a small clinic in the Musa Dagh country on the Mediterranean coast around Alexandretta, north of Antikya (Antioch). It was quickly clear to him that the Armenians there needed more help than he had ever imagined, or could cope with alone. He got on his horse and took a month to go to Cairo and back, to get drugs, funds and a nurse to help him. He improved the role of the clinic, married the Irish nurse and subsequently began the building of the family of western trained doctors who became famous for their service in the Middle East.

"When I first met him, Doctor A. A. Altounyan was ninety. I was in his home in Aleppo one morning as he sat reading the paper over the breakfast table. I had acquired an "Aleppo eye", a swelling on the cheek under the eye, the like of which he had seen many although to me it was remarkable. He proceeded to help me by massage, and it was gone in twenty minutes."

"Over the years, the scattered Armenian people throughout the Middle East have felt discrimination first from the Turks, culminating in the genocide just prior to World War I, and more recently from the Syrians. It was a hidden threat to them, although outbreaks of hostility and violence became less frequent as time went by. The doctor's house was a good example of the attempts Armenians made to protect themselves. He and his son, Dr. Ernest, the colonel already mentioned,

acquired a property on a street corner in Aleppo for their two residences. A front door for one was on one street, the other on another. The houses formed a defensive thick wall from the corner in two directions. Mirrors hidden in the upper reaches of the porch area allowed them to see who awaited entry, and gave a glimpse of the traffic up and down the street. The doors themselves and the locks were substantial. Structured thus, the houses gave the two families good protection from the street. The walls surrounding them, sides and back, served security purposes if ever occasion arose, while both families had privacy in their own house all the time.

Dr. Ernest Altounyan had developed a clinic in Aleppo, apart from that near Alexandretta. He and his father subsequently built a hospital, then a chapel next door in memory of the mother, the Irish nurse. During the war, when Dr. Ernest was drafted into the military, the hospital managed to serve the people with the help of the old doctor, until such time as peace and the termination of army service came about. Meantime Dr. Ernest's son, Roger, was studying medicine at Cambridge, and due to come home in 1947.

"Colonel Ernest Altounyan's knowledge of medicine and medical problems in northern Syria was matched by an impressive knowledge of the peoples of the Middle East. He spoke at least five languages, He was so well-informed on the entire area, its people, its tribes, its feuds, that the British Army having drafted him for the Medical Corps, quickly changed his

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

assignment to Intelligence. Without much further delay he was attached to the Commander-in-Chief's Office in Cairo, with special responsibility for "the Palestine Problem." It was in this capacity that he made that early visit to UNRRA's office in Jerusalem, revealing something of the official attitude both the military and the mandate government had towards UNRRA. It was he who described our office as the single evidence of democracy in the otherwise fascist state that was fast developing in Palestine. In giving people the opportunity to return to their homelands, UNRRA was helping the Government to maintain the freedoms of a democracy and to protect those who chose to leave against reprisals from their own people.

I met Col. Alhounyan number of times on my trips to Cairo from Jerusalem, and discovered he liked to dance. Most Cairo restaurants had a small, tiled square for dancing and he was an energetic dancer, so I encouraged conversation instead and learned a lot about the Middle East I wouldn't otherwise have known. In addition, if we were in need of something the British military could help us get, I would tell him I was putting in a request for such and such a thing. It did no harm for him to know and sometimes he could be really helpful; the military supported UNRRA's work throughout the Middle East, providing trains, trucks, rations for refugee moves, or almost anything else we requested.

In January, 1947, I learned how instrumental our work in Palestine was to be in getting this support for the whole area. "At a morning conference with Selene Gifford, Director of the Welfare division in Cairo we had covered about all the details of the work that needed discussion when she surprised me with the news that the British military were withdrawing their support and assistance throughout the entire area of UNRRA's work in the Middle East, I tried to find out if UNRRA had protested; and I was firm that this could not happen; that indeed it would not happen. I remember Selena's mild but flat contradiction: "But Elizabeth, the British military have a perfect right to make their own decisions, and we must accept this." I was furious at such a capitulation, but held my tongue and left her. What to do? I had to reach Ernest Altounyan as quickly as possible, but now it was noon-hour and there was no point in calling military offices until after siesta.

That noontime I was one of six UNRRA people to take a seat in Polly Sedlak's front room in Shepheard's Hotel, the occasion being that she could offer us a first class view of a momentous procession: King Farouk of Egypt welcoming King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia on his first visit outside his own country. Preparations for the welcome were in evidence everywhere.[1]

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[1] Cairo pavements were sanded, Egyptian troops in Khaki

with buff cumberbunds and red tarbushes lined the street two deep. The brown skinned crowd was predominantly in black and white clothing. The main relief being the red tarbush and the occasional colour of European dress. Egypt's native costume, the white or colourless galabieh and red tarbush for the man; the sombre black cloak and veil for women, was part of the muted and sombre effect that people call "sinister". In a way it made of the people a colourless, lifeless mass that would not exist in a land that had achieved all its individual freedoms.

The lamp posts had green and white banners; those of Egypt with the crescents and stars, and those of Arabia with the dagger and legend in Arabic. Crowded were the windows and roof tops, and the crowd on the sidewalks were impassable. The terraces below us were filled with people. Every window had occupants.

His private yacht brought this giant of a scarred monarch to Suez at noon. The train brought them both, Farouk and Ibn Saud, to Cairo by three o'clock and shortly thereafter the procession. Formations of brown horses with gold encrusted red blankets and gold encrusted red uniformed riders, white breeches, tall lances and pennants flying. Then the big carriage with Farouk in his Naval uniform with red tarbush, much gold braid and trim: a very fat, pudgy little man. And old Saud, gaunt and relaxed, in beautiful brown robes with gold edging and red and white check Kaffieh, his enormous hands langidly acknowledging the roar of the crowd; six horses with pink ribbon reins: outriders and bare foot out runners with gorgeous breeched uniforms and turbans. Then a flank triangle in formation of white horses similar to the first lot only blanketed

in brilliant French blue, their riders uniformed in the same colour. Then followed fourteen open landaus each with two or four men, almost all Arabs in black robes and white Kaffiehs with a few Egyptian military. Then cars, the royal red Packards, big black limousines, some British military among them. An absence of women, none in the procession, only a few in the crowd. It has been officially announced that no women are to be presented during his stay, to him who has had countless wives, and forty-two sons. There were huge arches, in the form of Pyramids, at Opera Square by the English bridges and at various other spots around the city. For the following ten days traffic was to be intermittently held up while his majesty passes by, much to Collier's disgust. "Why can't he move about unobtrusively, London would be a mess if the King did this thre." One heard many remarks of bitterness at the £E120,000 which were spent in the ten days visit; government hospitality to a neighbour king and his entourage of 90 housed in a special palace. Mrs. Stiven, Katy, Antonius' sister from London says, "Well, take a good look, this is the last such parade Egypt will see. In ten years there will be a complete revolution if the seeds of Russian thought continue to be sewn as they have been recently."

"There is no doubt about this being an event:Saud visiting Farouk. This was Ibn Saud's first trip out of Arabia, he's old now, with no named heir. His country has entered into oil agreements with the Americans up to the hilt. Britain tapped Arabia for oil and said it didn't exist there. A few years later the United

> States tried, hit a bit deeper and millions will be made out of it. So the focus of European and Western attention in the MiddleEEast has slipped from Cairo and the canal, where it has rested since Napoleonic times, to the Saudis and their desert kingdon."

"After years of indifference and competition Arabia and Egypt were finding it advantageous to talk together. The former's ties with the United States and the latter's with Britain were being encouraged and cemented in an effort to counteract the introduction of Soviet thought and influence. Apparently, of the £ 150,000 raised to launch the Arab league, Iraq was paying the biggest proportion (two thirds). Egypt agreed to pay £ 30,000 but renegged, deliberately, because Farouk was trying to force Azzam Bey, the secretary of the League, to keep the control in the west, instead of the east, meaning Moscow. Syria, Transjordan and Iran lined up with Iraq, Lebanon with Iraq too; although the reason for this latter seemed based more on personal ties - the marriage between an Iraqui princess and one of the top officials in Damascus. Some say it's time the Palestinian Arab leaders, removed by Britain during the Arab revolt, were brought back from exile and re-established. Most have been, it's true, but Jamal Effendi el Husseini recently released and received by Emir Abdullah in Amman needs to be put in a leadership post. The Arabs I know here think this time Palestine needs Arab leadership, and the

interest and support of the League to help her. They also claim El Husseini still has their loyalty, and that it should be used in this growing predicament.

"All of this was the subject of a general conversation with the UNRRA staff finishing their lunch after the parade went by. Then we went our several ways to finish the siesta. I walked downstairs rather than wait for the slow old elevator. And a good thing I did, for I ran into Ernest Altounyan at the foot of the stairs. We both exclaimed we'd not known the other was in Cairo, and agreed to meet for dinner that evening.

There's no need to dwell on the way the evening went. We were late and had to content ourselves with a small table almost on the dance floor. Against the noisy band we talked mainly in generalities, but the good music encouraged dancing. Half way through the evening I started kidding about the British military decision, and their walking out on UNRRA. I could see this was nothing to make fun of: the colonel was becoming stern and grim. It was difficult for a bit to get him to relax and to forget it for the present. This was exactly what I wanted, for we both well knew UNRRA could not work in Palestine without their help, but now the point was made, I was quite prepared to go on dancing, enjoying the evening. My message had gotten through.

What happened next morning in Selene's office, during our brief goodbyes before I left for Jerusalem, seemed to me

a small miracle so far as timing was concerned. Selene answered her phone while I sat in front of her desk. After a brief conversation, she hung up and said, "Well that's good,' the British military have changed their mind." I left her for home and considered I'd had a successful business trip. I flew from the Nile to the Dead Sea, a most comforatble way to travel. Taking off and landing on its pontoons, the big Sunderland, a sea plane, made a splash on the water that was more pleasant than the jolting normal with ground landing. The interior was big enough to allow privacy yet not large enough to hold a real crowd. It's a pity such civilized travel is lost to the world because of economics.

"On the way home I was ruminating about the Altounyan family and how their lives were interwoven in a braoder area than just Jerusalem where I had known them, or indeed Cairo where it seemed the Colonel had often enough helped me accomplish something for UNRRA's work. Their lives in this part of the world were like those of many other Armenians elsewhere, unobtrusively rooted in a variety of footholds. Dr. Ernest had had a small dairy farm up the coast from Antikiyah in Hatay, an area acquired from Syria by the Turks. It was a modern and efficient place and over the years became established and useful in the community. In the pine forests, high above the plain he built a big, cool summer house, rather like a Bavarian hunting lodge. Mrs. Altounyan, Dora, sister of R. G. Collingwood, the English critic and man of letters, had painted the gaudy

shutters, making a handsome house even under the circumstances in which I saw it. When the Turkish government evicted all Armenians, the family lost the farm, its livestock and equipment as well as their lodge in the hills. On a vacation trip into Turkey, years after the eviction took place, I volunteered to visit the lodge, which I did, but in one way I wished I hadn't, for the findings were cruel. The house had been vandalized, shutters were missing or hanging by one hinge, doors were broken, squatters lived in every room. The Colonel summed up his reaction about the Turks with, "Everything they touch is filled with decay." One could hardly blame him for being bitter.

"In Jerusalem the Altounyans lived in an old Arab house in a section called Katomon. Their daughter Brigit was sometimes with them, but more likely staying with her grandparents in Aleppo. It was on one of my visits to the family in Aleppo, that I went with Brigit by car across northern Syria, to a ferry across the Euphrates the same as in Biblical days, then by mulepack to their farm in the hinterland. It was a cluster of fields planted in grains. Adjacent were ripening fields of hashish. The cement cube of a house was functional only, and with the days as hot as they were, we slept on the roof under a magnificent canopy of stars. Brigit loved this place, and living here. It was obvious that she knew the neighbours far and near, as people she could trust. Many of them, like the Altounyans, had known T. E. Lawrence, who had spent

some time in this same area. Even at the time of my visit, they all enjoyed recounting experiences with him.

"It was surely hinterland territory, the people more primitive than one would find in Aleppo or in the beehive huts and villages of northern Syria. A Saracen castle on the banks of the Euphrates was a relic of days of more activity, more work than existed now. The land produced crops such that people could live on, but there was a barrenness and a silence about the place that was eerie. We stayed but three days; food being a bit of a problem had we wanted to stay longer. I believe, however, Brigit would have stayed on, and made local trips by mulepack. It was a misfortune for me that I never did enjoy riding a donkey. In any event we retraced our steps to the ferry, across the river and back to Aleppo to find that Harry Iliffe, archeologist from the Jerusalem museum and from Toronto, was also a house guest of the Altounyans. Generous people, they would not allow their friends to stay at the Barron's Hotel in Aleppo, which they called the "robber barons".

CHAPTER VII

Assyrian Refugees, Syria & Lebanon.

In October 1947, we received a letter from Headquarters Cairo, enclosing one from Geneva, asking for information about a group of 233 Assyrians living in Lebanon and Syria and seeking assistance from IRO. The following report labelled 'first draft'was sent home to my brother Harcourt as a matter of general interest. So far as I am aware no action was ever taken in regard to their request. The report is included because it throws further light on the great diversity of people living in the area.

"Because there is no one organization or government department dealing with the Assyrians in the Lebanon, it has been necessary to piece together the story and information about them from any source able to contribute. Because too the information gathered has been given (especially when characterizing the Assyrians themselves) frankly and because some it is of a derogatory nature, the people who have been good enough to help me in this investigation have all too frequently for my liking said "don't quote me" or "this is off the record". I have therefore listed their names as having been interviewed but must ask that this information be kept confidentially for IRO knowledge only.

HISTORY - In order to get a full picture a short historical sketch is necessary. The Assyrians for some centuries past lived approximately two million strong in the Hakkiari mountains in Turkey. Some believe them to be descendants of the original Nestorians - or followers of the first heresy against the Church. Whether or not this is so is immaterial but the fact that the Assyrians themselves give it credence is an important feature to be remembered in gauging their particular psychology or claim to privilege.

In the first World War the Assyrians joined up with the Russians and developed a name for good fighting. With the coming of the revolution in Russia, and the consequent breakdown of Russian leadership and support the Assyrians fought on- and were gradually pushed into Iraq. Thousands were massacred at the hands of the Moslem Turks.

In the late twenties their chosen Patriarch and leader, Mar Shamoun tried to employ them at what they were best at doing - fighting - and to lead them against the Iraqis as being conquerable. Outside sources - French, so it is said - supplied the arms for this. But Feisal approached them and arranged a peace; they were then disarmed. In a revolt of the Assyrians further massacres again took place and some 20,000 were killed.

In consequence, many that were left drifted into northern Syria. Through the interest of the Archbishop of Canterbury, efforts were made to help them and some of their leaders were taken abroad to be educated. But the British emissary, Mr.Gracie, together with workers in the field, interested the League of Nations in planning a resettlement scheme for the 10,000 who were homeless and in need in Syria. In 1933 the League of Nations brought into being the resettlement scheme which still exists as a community on either side of Habbour river in the Jezireh or "island" between the Tigris the Euphrates and the Turkish border. Livestock, equipment, land and essentials were supplied and the people for the most part have settled down and made their living.

Adjustment was not easy for them because basically they were mountain people and not accustomed to the agrarian life of the plains. In addition, with summer temperatures as high as 120° , with drought, locusts and other difficulties, it speaks well for the group that their industry helped them become established. It should be noted that this group is one among Beduoi Syrians, Kurds, Armenians and Circassians and that there has been no record of discrimination or intolerance of any sort, despite the Moslem preponderance in the total population of 200,000 in the immediate area.

It should also be recorded that several sources state the French policy of impressing the minorities with the belief that if the French mandatory power were to be withdrawn there would be discrimination, and even persecution has in no instance been proven true. The tradition of Moslem tolerance still stands the test in regard to this group, or indeed insofar as any minority group in Syria is concerned. Many of these Assyrians have acquired Syrian nationality.

The report of the Spears Mobile Clinics and Friends Ambulance Units' findings throw no good light on the French mandatory government in its district work in this area. It evidently made little effort to assist the people to maintain the installations the League had put in. In contrast, it seems the new Syrian government has taken over the public services, hospitals, clinics, schools, etc., revived by the two relief

organizations mentioned above, has employed staff and premises and is attempting to support them. There is still room for plenty of improvement but Syrian Government has thus far maintained good standards.

How the Lebanon came to have Assyrians - At the time that the above resettlement scheme was launched, Assyrians from various other areas (they are scattered from India through Europe) came home to settle. Among these was a small group of about thirty from Vienna who signed League documents, agreeing to settle in the Jezireh and who were moved by the League via Italy to Beirut. When they disembarked they flatly refused to go to Jezireh and a compromise plan was worked out whereby they were settled at Ma'alak, between Shtaura and Zahle' in the B'kaa valley in the Lebanon. This group is employed in agriculture and is established.

There have been other drifters leave Jezireh and come to the Lebanon. These are scattered throughout the country. They are employed and many, as in the group at Ma'alaka, have acquired Lebanese nationality.

In the recent World War the French army enlisted many of the Assyrians and at the time of French military evacuation, Syria was cleared first. In evacuating the troops from the Lebanon, a plan to move the Assyrians to Madagascar was drafted but never materialized.

A FRENCH RESPONSIBILITY - As recently as four or five months ago, the French government had in hand a plan, and arrangements for shipping were made, to move the group to Tunisia. There seems to have been some question of shortage of funds, which the French claim had something to do with the cancellation. The indecisive attitude towards the wisdom of such a move on the part of the authorities in Tunisia seems also to have deterred them. It seems difficult to prove at this time how much these points had bearing on the decision, but it is clear and acknowledged that it was the verbal intercession of the Lebanese Minister of Foreign Affairs who spoke firmly to the effect that this group were welcome in the Lebanon, that the whole matter was finally dropped. In other words, Lebanon is willing to absorb the group and preliminary informal checking on this point during the present investigation proves this to be still true.

COMPOSITION OF THE GROUP - Specific listings of families and occupations have been promised at time of writing, by the French Legation in Beirut.

There are apparently two main and rival tribal groups represented in the Assyrians in the Lebanon. Their leaders are Johanna Malik, who claims 233 in his tribe and Rais Isaaq who claims 200. It is said any list provided by either of these men shows great duplication with that or the other tribe and it is therefore estimated that the total in the two groups is not more than 300. The two leaders as well as their Commandant,

Joseph Melkis-Sadek (ex-Major) have, it is said, all seen service in the French Army. For this reason they might be unwelcome should they wish to return to Syria. The Commandant was active in French intelligence during the war. For the ordinary man of the group, it is said there would be no difficulty in his returning to the Jezireh, were he to decline the offer of the Lebanese Government for absorption in the Lebanon.

It is to be noted that with the growing nationalism in these two countries, a distinction such as that noted above, that is senior service with the French forces, which is relevant for Moslem Syria, breaks down in the case of the Lebanon when the group is Christian. This is the first fact to be noted as disproving the group's claim to "persecution" in the Lebanon. No Christian group bears such discrimination in this country. Indeed it has been a sanctuary for Christians since 1860 and their Christianity is a part of the Lebanon's reason for wanting to remain separate from Syria, as well as a part of their reason for welcoming Christian groups. There is no discrimination, let alone persecution against Christians in the Lebanon. The idea is unthinkable and irrelevant here.

Among the Assyrians there are four Christian sects: The Nestorians, the Jacobites, the Maronites and Protestants. The term Chaldean is used broadly in this connection to cover the group that pay their respects to Rome, for in the same way as there are Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic, Armenian Orthodox and Armenian Catholic, there are Assyrian Nestorians and Assyrian Chaldeans.

Jewish middle-class background [illegible], it is said, all seem [illegible] in the French army. For this reason they [illegible] should they wish to return to Paris. The [illegible] was active in French intelligence during the war. For the majority of the group, it is said there would be no difficulty in the [illegible] of the [illegible] were it to [illegible] the office of the [illegible] Government [illegible] in the [illegible].

It is to be noted that [illegible] is given the [illegible], a distinction such as this [illegible] that is [illegible] with the French [illegible], which is [illegible] for [illegible] Syria, [illegible] done in the case of the [illegible] when the [illegible]. This is the first [illegible] of [illegible] and group's claim to "[illegible]" in the [illegible]. No [illegible] in this [illegible]. Indeed it [illegible] a [illegible] their [illegible] and their [illegible] a part of the [illegible] for [illegible] from [illegible], as well as part of their [illegible]. There is [illegible], [illegible] in the [illegible]. The [illegible] and [illegible].

Below the [illegible] there are four [illegible], the [illegible], the [illegible], the [illegible] and [illegible] the [illegible]. [illegible] in this [illegible] the group [illegible] and [illegible]. For in the [illegible] of [illegible] the [illegible] and [illegible] Catholic, [illegible] and [illegible] Catholic, there are [illegible] and [illegible] Chaldeans.

For the most part the Assyrians speak Aramaic, some speak Syriac. In addition to speaking one or other of the above, there are those who speak Arabic or Armenian, but many speak only Aramaic.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GROUP - This is the difficult part of their record to present. As mentioned in the first paragraph, their belief in their long historical record gives them a distorted view of their own importance. To many of them, their Assyrianism is the only thing they agree on - and the splits and schisms otherwise are apparently countless. As well as the religio~~i~~us groupings and the rival tribes mentioned above, political leanings are many and of all kinds.

One hears the word blackmail used by so many in reference to these people. Apparently it is a developed trait to approach a foreign power, or a new organization, complaining of the present regime, or of the last person, organization or government who has helped them. Their priests and leaders are known around Beirut as practised beggars. The story of the leaders who travelled the length and breadth of Europe collecting money for the group from any and every source only to settle down and build themselves houses and villas with the money in France is repeated in miniature by almost everyone who has had contact with the local group. They say they want work; it is found and they refuse. The priests have a reputation for being a bad lot and I have been warned and re-warned not to believe any of the group. It is said they will do anything to get funds - and that once secured, it can be guaranteed

they will not be used for the purpose stated.

Those in Lebanon are said to be "employed" although it is stated they could many of them get better jobs than they have. They are content to work little and to earn little. One hears repeatedly that they are lacking in ambition, truculent, persistent in begging. Their one prowess seems to be as soldiers, in this they have a reputation as crack marksmen and a record of great courage.

CONCLUSION: - 1.) The French Legation, is the one voice that speaks kindly on behalf of this group. This, it may be assumed, is because they feel a moral obligation or responsibility toward those among them who have given military service in the French Army.This is not viewed by the writer as a valid reason for IRO assistance.

2.) The proposal to move this Christian group to Tunisia, a Moslem country, seems to lack any valid reason, other than its being the only possible practical solution the French Government could find for one of France's problems. A review of the characteristics of the group - mountain people, Christian of various sects, Aramaic speaking rather than Arabic, etc., throws into light many difficulties that would arise for them if they were moved to Tunisia.

3.) Most important of all, the country in which they are is willing to absorb them. Indeed they have already drifted into the population to such an extent that they are not to be found in any one location or group. If Lebanon were asking

IRO assistance in removing the group, the wisdom of the proposed move in view of 2) above would be questionable.

If however, there are forces at work on our Headquarters in Geneva to accomplish this move, it is recommended that no steps be taken unless official approach is made to both the Syrian and Lebanese governments to first secure their views. The implications for our organization, to say nothing of those of the 10,000 Assyrians in Syria, would be much broader than the proposed move for the 233 individuals mentioned in the letter from Geneva.

CHAPTER VIII

Moving the Refugees: A Field Journal Record.

On February 18th 1946 a Monday, Selene Gifford phoned "come to Cairo" to discuss putting my Greeks in Nuseirat. Tuesday I took the plane, the BOAC boys are beginning to think I'm a commuter. Good trip this time - got to the Continental by five - had a bath and a change and took a cab to the office, saw Selene Gifford and Colonel Anderson. Then Colonel Van Zyle Hyde and his successor chief, Brigadier T. T. Waddington, retired nice old Englishman, won't have the push or leadership of Hyde, will probably delegate more. Had dinner with Selene at her pension. She has an admirer among the boarders. We drank his scotch before dinner, and he brought me home in his new car, recently arrived from England. (Where did he get priority for that?)

"Selene and I spent the evening on her balcony with the full round moon staring through the mosquito screen and the listless stirring of the soft foliage outside, anything but conducive to our talk of business. UNRRA is very fortunate to have Selene, for she is a fine example of a New Englander, a well-liked professional social worker, but it is a pity anyone who has the qualities she has disciplines herself to the work so strictly and exclusively. As is usual among so many of the foreigners here, they seem to have very little curiosity about all the varied new interests in a foreign land. They stick to themselves for their companionship.

"The gist of the evening's talk was that Headquarters wanted me to be on the UNRRA payroll. Selene says, and she's probably right, that a branch office carrying the responsibilities Jerusalem office has must be under an UNRRA staff person taking direct responsibility. This means I resign from ACCR who are currently asking me to go to France where they hope to set up a vocational training center like the successful one they have had in the USA. Since I'm not sure France has need for such, nor has asked for it, I have serious reservations about the plan. Anyway I like where I am, and am glad to be on UNRRA's staff, which adds an element of stability if not security to the assignment.

"We also discussed the suggestion of my moving the Palestine Greeks into Nuseirat camp, which was the ostensible reason I'd come to Cairo. Selene quickly saw that a move as unattractive to the Greeks at any time, was obviously going to be virtually impossible in the face of their constant and pressing demand for us to move them home. In view of the politics surrounding the suggestion here at headquarters and in Athens however, it was agreed we would follow through to get first hand decision. Selene said they knew we were moving a first small group of construction men and their families to Samos, and that this encouragement in the whole picture made the chances of having any of them move to Nuseirat all the more unlikely and she would await word from us of developments with interest.

"February 24th, Sunday.Whistling wind outdoors, cypresses swaying and switching in the rain and hail. The last two days have been so glorious it's scarcely possible to credit the change. Last Sunday they had snow that lasted till Monday here in Jerusalem. But last Sunday I was still in Cairo and despite grey, windy weather had the kind of day any foreigner could wish for were he sojourning in the Middle East,

"Breakfast in our room at the Pension Viennoise, - Evelyn Rauch one of the social workers from UNRRA's Headquarters and I put on our coats to go and find some flowers and supplies for the evening party. A big demonstration of University students came up Antikhana Street just then, so the landlord, Monsieur Pierre suggested we wait a bit. We finally roamed out to the medan and on up Suleiman Pasha and back to Kasr el-Nil bringing Irish whisky at ⱢL1.20 and delphiniums and African daisies for .80p.

"I met an Arab friend Badia Bulos at Groppi's Cafe at quarter to one and we took a taxi out to Maadi to Dr. Fares Nimr Pasha's house. He is the father of four daughters and one son. Lady Smart and the son in Alexandria I've not met, but Katy Antonius, and I have become good friends, and through her I have met sisters Nellie Stiven and Babs the artist and unmarried one. The old gentleman Nimr Pasha is 92 years of age, a bit deaf, the Dean of Egyptian journalism, he has a mind and a stream of talk, as bright as any you'd want to meet. The day being grey and chilly, was considered horrible by Egyptian standards so they had four open grate fires going in the var-

ious downstairs rooms of their beautiful house. We sat in a big, spacious hall before lunch and had aperitifs and some of the native nuts with husks on that I always have trouble managing. The dining room is a big, bright, French-doored room with a beautiful burled walnut table, yellow drawn work and embroidery place mats and serviettes, a beautiful corn yellow Worcester bowl and tray filled with a glorious tangle of yellow flowers from the garden. The effect of all this giving the illusion of sunshine on this grey day. Excellent lunch but the old gentleman's talk made the conversation more interesting than the food. He talked of his childhood in Egypt, of the first sugar cane grown there,of the evaluation of a man as wealthy if he could afford sugar and rice, then an expensive commodity to import. He talked of the national home in Palestine, of the trouble he had returning from England to Egypt at the beginning of the first World War, and his securing Kitchener's assistance to board a troopship in the place of one of the officers, and of Kitchener's interest in having him talk with the men on Middle East affairs. His friendship with Kitchener out here, with Sir Henry MacMahon Minister for the Middle East and T. E. Lawrence. One could sit for hours just listening to this record of history in the decades prior to World War I. Nellie, the daughter who is married to an Englishman says she believes there's a natural bond between Arab and Jew, even if one did not know they are both Semitic, and that she finds repeatedly travelling or living abroad that she's drawn into contact or association with Jewish people.

Still in Cairo, I discovered the Cleveland woman Marion Wilson, with whom I'd shared a room at College Park, was also at Headquarters in connection with her work as Social Welfare Officer at Camp El-Arish in the Sinai. We arranged to return to our "home base" on Monday, February 24th 1946, so at 7:30 that morning we had managed to get ourselves and our duffle out on the pavement; just as Collier arrived with the Hudson, ready for the trip to Jerusalem. There was an overcast sky and the word was that there had been a sandstorm in the Sinai, about which neither Collier nor I had been able to get any firm inforamtion, as to whether the road was open or not. At this hour of the morning the work-day had not yet begun, for us to take further time to check. The ragged Arab boys and men were still picking up papers and cigaret butts in the streets. Kites still soared and mewed above in the yellow morning sky, the occasional donkey brayed shatteringly loud as he pulled his cartload to market. We drove up the road by the sweet water canal to Moascar and Ismalia. Women filling their water jugs and raising them to their head tops to carry home, men and women working in the fields, camels with clumsy loads plodding along in strings behind their fellaheen, in his only role as master. The occasional felucca, and ferry boats being hand drawn by a suspended pulley across the canal, men, children, camels, goats and baskets of stuff all going along with it.

At Ismailia we found what we'd try to learn last night by phone. The Sinai road with sand drifted over it, was impassable, no traffic getting through. Now eleven o'clock, I asked Marion if she was willing to go to El Shatt, the refugee camp down near Suez. She agreed and we turned south drove down the Suez road past Bitter Lakes and on to the pontoon bridge that took us across to camp.

There used to be twenty thousand Yugoslavs here. The total is now 4500, and this includes Greeks, recently arrived from Dar es Salaam. Its still possible to see kitchens, tent arrangement, staff compaunds and mess, even the Yugoslav's cemetery with a tall lone monument standing up above the rolling desert. It was a useful visit from the point of view of the work, though Jack Hughes the O. C. kidded me it took an act of God to get me there. We sat in the staff lounge, a mixed international group, British, American, Palestinian Jews, Egyptians (I had a good visit with Mona Doss Halim's sister, who is the dietitian,)Czechs, Yugoslavs, Greeks. They showed us the film "White Cliffs of Dover" which does no harm in its way, toward building international relationships. After a hot chocolate drink from the PX we retired to our tents. Walking out from the house the brilliant moonlight reflected from the desert sands and tent-tops reminded me of my first nights in Egypt at Camp Maadi, more than fifteen months ago, but the thought was soon gone, as the crunching sand under my heels reminded me just faintly of trudging in the snow at home in

Canada.

Tuesday after lunch Marion and I loaded the car and shoved off across the canal lower down and by ferry, and went on down for a quick run through the town of Suez. One can imagine its atmosphere when the heat of summer comes, all the material in setting - and in human kind for Somerset Maugham's demoralized characters. We were saying so as a thin-faced Padre came up the street. His stance and his face reflected the slow death that comes to people who've known better places and lives than in such a spot as this.

High three decker balconies on most of the houses, French influence a bit as in New Orleans. Narrow streets congested with traffic and kids playing all through it, an air of tawdry cheapness about the buildings, shops with a scarcity of merchandise. Yesterday Suez was out of bounds, the nationalist uprisings have taken the form of protest against the foreign merchants or business people here. The Egyptians are jealous and resentful of the Syrians, the Armenians, the Greeks, the Swiss, and the other outsiders who have come into Egypt and made money. Badia says its because the Egyptian is outsmarted by all of these that this protest has happened, and that the recent demonstrations though principally against Britain are symptomatic of a much wider resentment against all the outsiders, as the cause of the desperate poverty of the fellahin.

There were only a few troops around today however, hardly any Navy and but few air force. Port Tewfik is more modern and better built, has a fine water front esplanade ending with a big monument with two fine stone tigers built in memory of the 5000 Indian troops who lost their lives in defence of the Canal 1914 - 1918. Further up the canal is the big monument to British forces. It can be seen for miles in all directions and is one of our first landmarks for the Canal as we come to Egypt by road from Palestine.

Marion and I went to the French Club for tea, sat on the terrace beneath the wan Aleppo pines and the flamboyant trees that must be beautiful herein May. The blue canal is very broad at this point and the amethyst hills of Sinai tapered way off in the distance beyond the Red Sea.

When we got back to Ismailia we found the road was carrying traffic. We settled into the luxurious YW room with private bath and breakfast for 28 piastres or $1.12 for each of us fort-night which seemed incredible. Next morning we made El Arish camp on the Mediterranean by lunchtime. Only once did we have to be dug out of the drifts, and shoved from behind, and at that point we had the luck to have three jeeps and a truck and seven paratroopers to heave us on our way.

It was good to have a visit with Marion again. As I said she was my room-mate at College Park in Maryland when we trained for work with UNRRA. She's a rough and ready Clevelander

with a taste for drink, for reading, for music and people. Competent, she has had a rough time with a liver complaint since she's been over here. Unlike most of her countrymen who stick by themselves, read their own papers and books, see their own movies, Marion has a bit of a yen for knowing and experiencing things while she is here. She has made friends with Mona Doss, the dietitian mentioned above, who comes of a wealthy cotton growing family from Asyut, up the Nile, and has been to visit the family.Marion was full of questions about "my" territory Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Transjordan.

After lunch at El Arish Collier and I came on up through Rafah, Gaza, and Latrun to Jerusalem, where we had a warm welcome in the office. We have six weeks of heavy work ahead of us in connection with moving the Czechs.

Shortly after that trip to Cairo, on a grey Sunday afternoon March 10th 1946, Mr.Vernardio, Director of the Greek Ministry of Social Welfare in Athens, his assistant Mr. Vrailas, and Major Sandakis of the Greek army assigned to Nuseirat camp came to the YMCA to see me. It was just after four so we had tea in the big lobby and I told them Cairo's desire to put Jerusalem's list of free living refugees into Nuseirat. There was much discussion of all factors and of what the reaction would be. Finally at about 5.30 or so we went over the hill and down to tell the people at the Convent of the Holy Cross the news. We sat in chairs on the roof, and they sat and stood

all around us, while Mr. Venardis and the Major told them in Greek what the proposal was. There was silence for a bit, then one after another expressed objections, and in spite of the good record Nuseirat has the poor souls think they're going to die if they go there for a few days. They talked about climate, about dirt, about tents, about moving their luggage, about theft, about how much Greece has done in the war, about seven hundred children dying in Nuseirat, a fiction manufactured from thin air. They gave us a flat refusal and we finally left. The people were already unhappy that we were so tardy in moving them home. They had no intention of commiting their future to a refugee camp.

From there we went to the Greek Consulate and talked to Mr.Christodulo, officially in charge of refugee affairs for his government, but a man not the slightest bit interested in helping his own people. He asked no questions about UNRRA's decision to put the free-living Greek refugees into camp, nor did he even ask about the movement of his people home to Greece. One would have thought that a visit from the Director of his Ministry of Social Affairs would have prompted some interest by the local official. It was obvious to us all we were wasting our time, so we left him.

Next morning, Monday, in the office, we had an urgent call from Nuseirat "could we help get Major Sandakis out of the Convent of the Holy Cross where he was being held as a

hostage." It seemed that after the Major got the two officials from Athens on their way by car to Cairo, he went back to see if he could persuade the refugees to move to camp. They would have none of it, and when he decided to leave they would not permit it, but consented to his calling Nuseirat. He told the staff there what had happened and said when they got a ship for them to go home on, the people at the convent would release him. The camp phoned us, and with George I made the trip to the convent and got the Major released. The people could see that we all understood they were serious about wanting to go.

Up at 3 o'clock one morning, about two weeks after this hostage incident, we waited at the curb till an Arab driver drove up in a troop carrier, and a few minutes later a young English corporal in a three ton truck. George got in one and I in the other and we showed them the way to the Convent of the Holy Cross on the outskirts of town, down the rough and rocky road to the low door in the high wall. Four stray and sleepy souls awaiting us, and not a light or sign of any preparation for departure, these Greeks!! The drivers turned the vehicles around and gradually a crowd gathered, about sixty strong. We were only moving 25 of them, building tradesmen, masons, carpenters, stone cutters, bound for Samos with their families. The mound of bales and boxes of luggage they finally produced was amazing. Quantities of stuff, Greek lettered and bound with blankets and ropes. By candlelight, we checked off those to go as they boarded the troop carrier. One of the women

gave us hot chocolate and a rusk. When the luggage was thoroughly settled and three men sitting on top of it, we drove up the hill and through Jerusalem on our way to Lydda airport. There they had a long carry of their stuff through an underpass to the aircraft. This lot of refugees were flying to Egypt to join others chosen to help with rebuilding island communities, in preparation for a later return of other refugee families. The fact that there was at last a ship available to UNRRA to move a first group home was a boost to morale in the Greek communities, and also gave encouragement to staff members.

On November 13th, 1945, Aneurin Bevin, Prime Minister of Great Britain, made his announcement on Palestine in the House of Commons. Then Mr. John V. W. Shaw, the Chief Secretary administering the Government here, met first with Arab officials, and then with Jewish to read them what the decision was. A long and considered statement, as it turned out, which explains to the world much of the background and difficulties surrounding the situation, but which to be sure pleases neither side.

Also on November 13th, Colonel Livingston's office called from Cairo saying that because Thursday the 15th was a Moslem Feast Day UNRRA was having a holiday. I explained we were moving refugee Czechs, Italians and a few Greeks that day but that the staff would get compensatory time when we could.

Luggage for the refugees was moving 9 to 10 on Wednesday and Mrs. Tauber had gone in the car with Collier to Jaffa to ensure the loading of the van for the people in Tel Aviv. By 9:45 Maja Capek phoned from the RTO's office at Jerusalem station that the stuff there was all aboard. The Czechs are certainly responsible people. Mrs. Capek came to the office and with Dr. Sidler went to the Czech mission to get rail warrants signed for the medical team. Then Mrs. Capek caught her taxi to Haifa, and though none of us say anything about it, we all have our fingers crossed that tomorrow's move will come off alright.

And then came the first reversal. Movements phoned during the morning, that the trip, Jerusalem to Lydda Junction, would be by road. The number of engines available for the railway trains since the organized attack on railways two or three weeks ago is insufficient for them to keep this line running. The people will be moved in trucks therefore, the hour by road being the only advantage against the 2½ by train, but the job of shifting all the luggage already aboard the train, in the station had to be done.

That Wednesday morning with the weather continuing bright and clear Mohammed arrived at the office on his donkey and his baskets. He planned to buy foods while in town after work for the Thursday feast at his home. Helen took snaps of him and his filthy donkey. That afternoon of the 14th, Wednesday, a strike was declared by the Jewish community again to

register their disapproval of the White Paper. When Collier called for me in the car I had him drive me up through the new town on the way to the office. Closed up tight, people outside sauntering with children and baby carriages or sitting on Park benches in holiday mood. There was no evidence of violence anywhere but I'm not sure if Mohammed was able to do his shopping. The guns at 2:20 and 2:30 were a salute at the beginning of the Moslem holiday.

Back at the office at 4:30 things went fairly calmly. Mr. Korfias, the Greek priest already mentioned, came to get final assurance that it was alright for him and his family, and hospital case son to move down to El Shatt camp and Suez 13th General Hospital respectively. He is a whining old man, but I believe the similar story from all of us, the MO in Cairo, CO in Sarafand, the Greek Consul under my exhortations and the local patriarch have finally got it through his head that he will be nearer his child and not pushed off to the Dodecanese right away, if he goes to camp.

The Czech medical team with visas for Egypt expiring on the 22nd decided to disagree as to whether or not they should go with this move on Thursday the 15th. Those in Jerusalem and Haifa want to, those in Tel Aviv to postpone. Lulley, the vice-consul and temporary chief of CSR Repatriation Mission dislikes taking responsibility, or perhaps it's the precariousness of the Mission that makes him that way. Anyhow I

had been firm with him the day before,yet the Tel Aviv team members phoned to say they'd changed their mind and could they go Monday. Movements, as usual, have fallen in line and are willing to provide transport by truck or train from Tel Aviv to Lydda and on to Egypt on Monday.

So the staff were busy with nominal rolls, special case records, rail warrants, movement orders, letters to MEO on various bits of vital information - all the paraphernalia that goes with these moves. Collier returned from getting the mail with a box of cakes and we had coffe and got into a discussion of what makes a leader and how to combine a sufficient orientation in a difficult problem like Palestine with enough direction to accomplish anything. We compared examples Ben Gurion and his dynamic, almost ungoverned magnetism versus Chaim Weisman and his measured wise statemanship, FDR and Churchill and Attlee and Truman and should we include Menachem Begin and his violent men of the Irgun Zwei Leumi? and back to work.

We called it a day at 7:30 and Collier drove us home as usual. I went down to dinner here in the Y and the young American Sergeant who works as radio operator at the Consulate asked me to sit with him. He's covered most of Africa, the Balkans, Turkey, the Ukraine, Persia. He is bored with it all, devoid of any comment on the current affairs here and wants to go home to Cincinati.

That day Major Charles Heard and Capt. Murray Troup at after-dinner coffee had said they were glad the States is to have part responsibility in the "Palestine Problem", think the procrastination of a decision too bad from the standpoint of the troops who've been around these parts 4 to 6 years - that some other estimate than that of the Jewish Agency for Palestine on the number of Jews who want to come here from Europe is certainly a smart if obvious idea, and that they wished there was some way to ensure that things continue quiet as they are this morning.

Anyway Ohio Sergeant Bill and I were on the way out the door when Helen turned up in the lobby. Shed been "stood up" by her date, George Palmer of Associated Press, because of a hurry-up call he'd had, to get to Tel Aviv as the Jews were blowing up the Government buildings. We all went to the King David bar, and as I entered, Colonel Sir Giles Isham stopped me to ask would I come to his office tomorrow at 11:00 to meet the new Brigadier, Rowe by name. Mr. Marroum, the Arab lawyer who'd asked me to dinner last night, then tonight, was in the corner by himself. Mr. Quilliam of the London Times, a lean, older Englishman was with the Colonel and came over to ask if he might come to the office to see me. This was the open restaurant and bar in the basement of the King David Hotel in which the three milk cans full of explosives were placed the morning of the explosion and tragedy a few weeks later on July 27th 1946.

Over our drinks we fell into a discussion of the class barriers that exist in the American consular service abroad. There are such rigid codes among them that one might wonder where they come from, for they certainly don't exist in American society at home. I distractedly wondered whether tomorrow's move would be able to come off alright, and whether maybe now, some people would believe it was wise to get out, if they want to go at all, for there were quite naturally those that were having a difficult time to make what really was a major basic decision about their lives. Helen's report made me anxious about the chances of our getting those in Tel Aviv away with the refugee move.

And sure enough next morning the "Post" reported there was curfew on residents of Tel Aviv beginning at 1:00 a.m. last Wednesday, and until further notice. The minute I got in the office I phoned Major Haselwood in the DSO's office and asked what we could do to pull the refugees to be repatriated today out of Tel Aviv. He put me on to 21st area OQ2 and Security. The poor things were so busy they couldn't help me so instead of taking their suggestion to call the town Major, I called my old friend Mr. Arthur Frederick Giles, Deputy Inspector General of the Palestine Police. He wasn't in yet, Mr. Munroe, his second, said he'd get in touch and call me back, and could we furnish nominal rolls? - which we could. So while he was finding out I got on to Movements, who said

it was unlikely there'd be any trains from Tel Aviv to Lydda Junction, so it seemed pretty discouraging. Then came a call from one of the Czechs, Braun, he and his family and some others had moved to Jaffa to avoid any difficulties, spent the night there and were ready to go, bless them. Could he help me get any others if I'd send a military truck he'd guide it to all the Czech addresses - said I'd call him back. Munroe called, no go, they couldn't get news through to all their offices in time to let them allow those with our identification cards to move. Movements provided two trucks, reporting RTO Jaffa at 10 and 12 o'clock. Then I couldn't reach Braun, no hope Tel Aviv lines jammed. Then I told Mrs. Tauber she should leave with Collier at 11:30 instead of 12:30 which rather threw that orderly and methodical soul. Dr. Seidler had been in and his child was deathly ill again with that queer disease she has, so we offered to take Mrs. Seidler and the youngster down to Lydda in the car. We phoned to change the time. Movements called that Tel Aviv was out of bounds, and that army vehicles would be unable to go there. That meant they'd sent one truck at 2 o'clock to take those who could get to Jaffa to the train in Lydda by road. The phones kept busy, people wondering whether we could still send them away, and so on.

At eleven I kept the appointment with Colonel Isham to meet the new Brigadier and discuss the broad programme of UNRRA activities in Palestine and Levant States. Collier took

me over to Headquarters but I must say after the morning of uncertainties and readjustments and the general atmosphere of tension and jitters that pervades I wasn't feeling particularly geared to what might be needed. But one doesn't off-hand break an appointment with a Brigadier who is to be in charge of needed army services. Major Haselwood met me and took me to Colonel Isham. Major Prendergast joined us and we talked Austrians and their predicament. We discussed Jewish Agency teams and the idea of their going to Europe as "welfare" workers when actually they are really representatives of the J. A. to secure more immigrants.

Then the Colonel took me to Brigadier Rowe's office. He is a decent sort, plain, active, busy, no side. He said he'd known UNRRA in Greece and did I know two Canadian nurses - hum - Mary Henderson and her friend and of course I answered Heather Kilpatrick. I knew them only slightly but enough was known of their good work to enhance Canada's image in the Middle East. He talked of distribution of supplies by army vehicles there - said he'd also run across UNRRA in Austria and Czechoslovakia, all good background from my point of view. He's sympathetic. I said our job here was mainly repatriation, gave a bit on the Greeks, the Czechs, the oddments, the enemy nationals, the Polish and the Austrians - the highlights. The talk was meaty for both of us, and I think if I need his help I'll be sure to get it. He's well liked among the officers, known for his record of action and accomplishment.

I walked back to the Office and asked Helen to go down to the station, to be with the people arriving by twelve and after. At one I shut up shop and followed her. Five trucks, one for luggage and the rest took the people from the centre. We got them loaded and away by two, and came back to the Y for lunch.

Old Mr. Blatchford of the American Consulate, all his life in the Middle Wast, brother of Mary whose husband Bayard Dodge is president of American University in Beirut, gave us advice on how to behave in the Middle East today. He was having lunch with the Terrill's at the next table, when they were leaving he stopped to tell us "it's just as Jerome K. Jerome said, and it's particularly true of Palestine: When you stick your foot in the mud leave it there, if you pull it out you'll dirty the carpets." There are all kinds of attitudes towards this little country's predicament.

As the registration of Greek Jews in our Jerusalem office continued to grow we thought it was time to get visas for a first lot so that we could be working hand in hand with their government to help them get home. Nominal rolls were prepared and we made up a first trial list of seventy families which George Nicholakis took to the Greek consul for his approval and willingness to give them re-entry visas. George was soon back in the office with the word that the Consul had said "I cannot facilitate" with absolutely no reason as to why not. This came as an unexpected reversal for us, and George and I

wondered what his reason could be. If I were to ask Cairo to get visas for them from Athens, we ought surely to have a valid reason why we had either by-passed, or been unsuccessful with the local representative. So we planned another trip to the consul and this time I went with George. A more sterile and disinterested attitude could scarcely be imagined than the consul had for us that day. Ordinarily he had shown himself to be adequate and cooperative, but there had been no such signs of rigidity and lack of willingness to discuss problems. Nor had we any way of knowing whether this was the attitude of his Government, or a decision of his own here in Palestine.

Our next step was to ask Cairo Headquarters if they would be willing to take this first batch of applications and nominal rolls and to ask UNRRA Athens if they would approach the Ministry of Interior to see if permission for these people to return to Salonika could be granted. Headquarters was of course completely cooperative and we promptly shipped the papers to them for their onforwarding. It seemed no time had elapsed when we had word back. UNRRA Cairo relayed Athens Minister of the Interior's message - "Of course they can have permission to return. The whole of the economy of northern Greece depends upon these people, and any who wish to return will be welcomed to their homeland." Processing was a bit more cumbersome this way, but it was successful and that was all that mattered. We had to admit that there seemed no valid reason to deny what the Greek Jews here had speculated, that

the local Greek consul had had his hand greased by the Jewish Agency for him not to help the Sephardics go home, but to help keep them here. Awaiting repatriation and other than Greek Christian refugees, there were, it was estimated here 700 Jews including 150 on the Mandate Government's social welfare list, including 250 Sephardics whose families had lived in Greece 400 or 500 years, including 90 who simply could not produce documents or papers proving they were Greek, and the rest who could.

Cairo Headquarters Movements Office, working within the limitations of the military priority lists, had continued to make every effort to get us shipping space for the Palestine Greeks. Hundreds of people were trying to get out of the Middle East now that hostilities had ceased. Military and business people mostly wanting to get to Europe but some to North America, and South America too, all clamoured for space on any type of ship they could hear of. Shipping and Travel offices were under steady pressure to help people get away. The airlines were in this too, and they suffered from a lack of planes. In consequence, TWA found itself dubbed "Try Walking Across".

So it was with great relief that late in August,1946, Cairo movements called to say there would be a ship which would hold 2000 and be available on a date two weeks hence, and they were booking it, first for Beirut, then Haifa to take the bulk of the remaining Greeks home to their islands. The principal aim was to move all Greeks from Lebanon. Whatever Greeks were

to be left after the ship was filled to capacity must, if they wanted UNRRA's help in being moved, be in Palestine where future moves could more easily be made. They were pleased in Movements to give us this word but not as pleased as were to receive it.

By phone we reached the Greek Red Cross in Beirut, knowing the grapevine was as good a way of reaching people as any other we had. However a notice by mail was sent to all refugees in the villages where the Greeks lived in Lebanon and preparations for moving began in serious relief. The British Military here in Jerusalem provided the trucks to bring people to the ports of Beirut and Haifa. They provided rations, but in the main the refugees were asked to bring food for the trip. It was eviden~~t~~ce of UNRRA's Cairo office generosity and support that they sent two staff to help with preliminaries. This English couple were surprised that there wasn't really very much work for them to do. In Egypt the flights of refugees had come from the big camps, and staff had the task of assembling luggage, of taking care of children and babies while parents packed their belongings and so on. Unless they had visited the Jerusalem office, it had always been difficult for Cairo staff to understand that people who were refugees didn't always live in camps, and that here in the Levant they were all living as civilians, or in church institutions. In a way it was good that this was so, these people were less dependent on others when their refugee experience came to an end.

Some of the trucks came from the legendary Ninth Army stationed in Lebanon. However, they had to be supplemented by others from Palestine. It turned out to be redundant that we had tried to plan which trucks were for people and which for baggage, for the Greeks used each of their quota of trucks for people and their baggage. People took responsibility for their own things at both ends of the transfer. It took us a long morning, and as many as three or four trips back to some of the villages to get them all down and aboard. It seemed odd that they were leaving Lebanon and later, also Palestine with not so much as a gesture on the part of the host governments. Of course our office made reports to the Department of Social Welfare of the Government but that was all. With loads of bundles and boxes piled high in the trucks and people sitting on top or beside their goods, they had come roaring down the Lebanese hills to the port at Beirut. The two staff members from Cairo helped the purser assign bunks and space in the two big decks below. It was a warm enough spot to warrant some complaints from the refugees but the promise of sea breezes once we moved made them accept it. Half of each of the decks was reserved for the Greeks embarking at Haifa. Once our nominal rolls showed all aboard, and our signatures were on the military papers, the crew took over and moved the little ship, the S. S. Tripolitania, out to sea.

She sailed late noonhour in a calm sea on a sunny day. Grownups were in a way silent and pensive. They watched the shoreline as we sailed south along the coast to Palestine and Haifa. For many of them this interlude of being a refugee was a singular experience away from their own home in the islands, and though it had been an adequate existence for them for however long they'd been here, still it would be good to get back to the familiar sights and sounds their own village provided. For the moment as the ship moved slowly down the coast, people were quietly ruminating, and had no inclination to the excited chatter more typical of the Greeks. The children however were actively exploring standpipes, lifeboats, gangways and the ship's rail. It was their laughter and abandon, that brought the adults back to reality, and old and young adapted themselves to the confined space on the ship which was to be their home for the forthcoming few days it would take to reach each of their islands.

By late afternoon we were tied to the wharf at Haifa where the refugees were overjoyed to see us. They had had the full day to get here, and were much quicker to get aboard with their belongings because they had time to get organized. Before dark we sailed again, and our little ship set its course, picked up speed and took us north west across the Mediterranean south of Rhodes into the Aegean sea. The people were active in their preparations for their evening meal, but it was not long before the excitement of the day was behind

them and they settled into their kilims or blankets, and let the throbbing rhythms of the engines lull them to sleep.

The weather kept fair throughout the trip. Next morning all of us as staff arranged life boat drill which was the main activity effecting the whole ship's population for the next few days. On each deck a short announcement was made explaining what was to happen and what was required of all passengers. The gongs rang out and people streamed up the stairs and gangways to the upper decks to take their appointed stations. Three of us then made a tour of the ship to see that all were taking part. We found a few delinquents, on one deck a family, all ages, of about twelve people, absorbed in an argument. They told us they'd no need of going to boat drill as they had sent father up to represent them!

There was not much for people to do aboard this little ship for the few days. Organized occupations and games for the children were carried out by staff, but for the most part people made themselves comfortable on deck in shade or sunshine and chatted among themselves as the day went by. A staff member aroused himself to help an elderly Greek woman determined to climb the gangway, she would have none of it, could manage very well thank you and was just going up to get mother. Mother was a hundred.

By dark on the second night out we were entering the harbour at Samos where the numbers to debark were large enough

that it was decided to wait for daylight next morning. The pilot came out to meet us to do so. One man and his daughter among the refugees who were friends of the mayor were invited to go with the pilot in his caique, and luggage was lifted down into the small boat that had pulled alongside the ship. As this happened one could feel a certain annoyance and resentment among the refugees that one among them had been favoured, really without any of us knowing how it had happened. Amid this ruffled atmosphere, somehow a rumour got started and before we knew it one word on everyone's lips "klepsi, klepsi", "thief" was repeated and repeated and spread over the whole ship. There was no thief and no bag missing but it took some time for this outburst to spend itself. When it had again become quiet, people were willing to bed down for another night. No doubt those for Samos knew the ship was probably more comforatble than the first night ashore might be. At five next morning the caiques began pulling up along side us and it was not long before all the people destined for Samos had left us, and we were making our way to Chios. We had offloaded nine people in a caique which came from Icharia.

Our ship pulled up parallel with the shore at Chios. A steep hill rises behind the port and this morning the sun was still not high enough to shed its rays between us and the shore. The green water was limpid and clear and the list of the ship was apparent to all of us still aboard and going on to Piraeus. Everybody crowded over the portside to see the

little town and its buildings and to enjoy the early morning shadows on the mountainside and in the depts of the sea.

When we left Chios, it seemed to me the end of something good had come. I knew few if any of all these heretofore widely scattered refugees very well, but I had learned and experienced more about their ways than I had expected. They were home now and that meant "mission accomplished." To me it was a climax I didn't want to face. In another two days we tied up at the dock in Piraeus and said our farewells to the last lot of the Greeks disembarking, and to the Captain and the crew. Two days in Athens and a flight back to Cairo and Jerusalem where the work still awaiting me helped me forget the end was coming.

CHAPTER IX

Tension and Terrorism in Palestine.

November 16, 1945: The terrorists in Tel Aviv seem to have done considerable damage. The Palestine Post reports it at 200,000 L.P. of $800,000. There were 3 deaths and 70 hurt. Since the deaths and injuries are low and the damage so great, it indicates great good sense on the part of Police and military. "All officers and men instructed to use the minimum of force necessary. It's an unpleasant job for all of us and we don't like doing it. When we do have to fire we pick the ring leaders." Brigadier Lathburg OC third Paratroop Brigade. Throwing rocks, setting fires, tearing up moveable objects, like barricades and railings at the railway station, setting

fire to trucks and vehicles, general vandalism and not much sense to any of it. There was a mass meeting in Jerusalem, after which the crowd broke up peaceably; a few tried to start something in Zion square but it didn't last long. I wonder if they are beginning to realize they can't do their cause any good. That at least is the consensus here, but unfortunately it is not that way abroad where evidently it is condoned if not approved.

Back to Jerusalem from a Cyprus vacation on a Tuesday in July 1946, the country was quiet. While I had been away the five kidnapped officers had been returned because the government had revoked the death sentence on the two Jewish youths. The military had made searches of some areas and settlements, as a big haul of ammunition had been found up near Haifa, and there was the unpublished story of the Jews kidnapping the two young Jews who worked in British Intelligence and who they believed were responsible for disclosing the location of this twenty year old extensive and well hidden ammunition dump. The Jewish Agency had been searched and some of its officials arrested and imprisoned at Latrun, along with some 1600 others who were undergoing questioning. Many refusing to give their right names and data. Rabbi Fishman had been released. The Hebrew press continued its protests, in the vein that it didn't understand why such action had been taken against its leaders and its agency. The country was quiet.

Monday morning July 22nd 1946 Collier drove to Lydda to meet Dr. Louis Finlay and Arnold Curtis, two UNRRA officials arriving on the first Middle East plane. Mrs. Tauber and Helen and I were all busy at our desks. About 11:30 I called the secretariat and asked Mr. Musgrave for a letter he had promised me when I saw him Friday and he was surprised I hadn't received it and said he'd send it by hand which he did. I talked with one of the Jewish Agency team members going forward to Austria, about arrangements for his journey, and Mr. Golding was in my office arranging for tarnsport for another such group when we heard an explosion. Out on the terrace we could see that it was in the direction of the low signals building near headquarters. The smoke rose and blew away slowly and we went on with our work. Keeping track occasionally we noticed the roof of the King David Hotel was lined with people who seemed curious and interested in the explosion, then most of them went away. I was dictating a note to Helen in her office while Mr. G. waited in mine, when the most terrific explosion went off. We went out on the terrace again to see theKing David Hotel completely enveloped in smoke. Mrs. Tauber's "goodness sake" and utter shame on her face, I put my hand on her shoulder only to find Helen breaking into tears and shaking. We watched the smoke curl away towards the Dead Sea and the Union Jack shine through in the sunlight, and Helen said, through her sobs "I hope that British flag flies till the end of time."

As the smoke rolled away we could see the whole corner

of the building crumble and fall in a heap of steel and stone rubble. The terrorist sirens were still screaming. The Jewish Agency representative had decided not to wait for the letter and had left between the bangs. He said he'd send for it at once. In the end Helen finished typing it commenting it was a fine thing to have to do in the face of what was happening. For it's true this job of assisting Jewish Agency workers to go forward to Europe on loan to UNRRA ostensibly as regular staff workers, but in reality to do a propaganda job on poor benighted refugees and pep talk them into coming to Palestine to increase the Jewish population to make it a majority, it's all such a fraud so far as social work is concerned. Our primary work here now is repatriation of Jewish refugees discontented with Palestine, to their former homes in Europe. Mrs. Tauber delivered the letter to Mr. Golding much to his honest appreciation, and I don't doubt, surprise.

I came back to the Y for lunch. The blind road to the south was closed so I went round to the north to enter by the "cloister" terrace, the back windows were blown out. The glass around the box office was shattered and scattered over the stone floor. The doors and windows in various spots on the Y building were blown in with the explosion. People were milling round looking at the pile of rubble. Some of the Arab boys were complaining that the explosion took place at 12 and it took the military till 1:15 to start digging. Actually the explosion was at 12:37 and work began at one. When one later

knew it went on day and night for a week at full energy it was an unwarranted criticism though natural enought at the time. In the lobby were several people in shock. One old lady, who shook so she couldn't hold the teacup Joan Thompson offered her. Several men with blood bespattered shirts and trousers, black eyes, scratches, bruises. Soon an ambulance removed what was left of two Arabs who had been standing across the road from the explosion under the gym windows on the Y grounds. The passing bus load of civilians were all wounded and taken to hospital. Alfred Mower of the American newspaper, "The New York Post" had his leg broken as he crossed the street at the time of the explosion. There were countless minor incidents and injuries that were not included in the official "injured" lists.

This is Thursday as I write and it happened on Monday. Work has never ceased on the hot, dusty plaster, stone, steel and wood pile of rubble across the road from where I live. Troops in khaki shorts, mostly with the burgundy beret of the Paratroop corps, all with gleaming brown bodies, wield picks and drills and blow torches, use shovels and trowels, baskets to collect any carry or heave chunks of debris from off the chaotic pile. Trucks, jeeps, ambulances, cranes, tractors, bulldozers, NAAFI Mobile canteens, army vehicles of all sorts line every conceivable bit of surrounding roadway. A loud speaker is at hand, and I woke night before last to listen to a loud "Hallo Halloooh," for the voice from the loudspeaker

had hushed and stilled the work and every man stood motionless and silent while they tried to get a response from any that might live under the pile of debris. Finding Mr. Thompson, elderly assistant secretary, 27 years with the Government, buried beneath two arched pieces of wall and flooring for 31 hours led them to believe there might be others. But by Thursday, they find no answer, there are still 50 missing, the days are hot, the troops wear nose shields now, the work must be about all they can stand, the stench is so bad for them. Indeed it became so bad even across the road in the Y on that Thursday night I couldn't sleep till I finally got a big cotton handkerchief and tied it round my nose - it had been in my trunk and smelt of nice clean moth camphor.

Across the street the first aid station is set up, all the clean equipment, fresh bandages and blankets and further along the British YM has served hot tea and buns or cakes continuously since operations began. The machinery and men worked for 10 days at the wreckage. Each day the official list of the dead, today it's definite Mr. Musgrave, Mr. Boudillon, Eddie Azlam's sister - and earlier Mr. Kennedy the Postmaster General. Mr.Thompson died 8 days after they found him.

It's nearly two weeks since it happened. "91 dead and 13 missing." Milk cans delivered into the big basement bar in the King David Hotel, had created an emplosion strong enough to destroy the whole of the five storey wing of the

building, which housed the Secretariat of the British Mandate Government. A demolition blast has made the scars on the King David much worse.

Next morning as luck would have it, Katy Antonius called to repeat her invitation I come stay with her. I quickly accepted and it meant that I had a wonderful change in her beautiful house and garden. Katy was the daughter of Dr.Fares Nirm Pasha of Cairo, the dean of the Middle East newspaper world, now long since retired. She is the widow of George Antonius whose famous book "The Arab Awakening" played its part in the slow moving Arab renaissance. Katy is a sophisticated woman, educated in France and England, her sisters Lady Smart and Nellie Stiven live in England, and Babs in Switzerland, and this gives her reason to travel back and forth to Europe. Recently she had been on a lecture tour in the States and expressing surprise at how little the Americans know about the Arabs, she summarized the whole thing by throwing up her hands and saying "They didn't even know we wear nail-polish!" There was no doubt that Katy was respected among the Arabs, if not as a leader, as one prominent in defending their cause. She had opinions on everything and expected anyone invited to her house to take part in a dialogue or discussion which gave her parties, of which there were many, as much raison d'etre as those of a diplomat. Katy's chatter was endless but there was point in much of what she had to say, her wit could be cruel when she struck disagreement. I remember how disgusted

she was with RHS Crossman, the English Labourite who she said "arrived in Palestine with his mind made up." In this I found no reason to contradict her.

She lived in a house on the outskirts of Jerusalem that had been built for the muktar. Her adaptations made it combine western comfort with Arab and French aesthetics. Her taste was excellent and her things beautiful, the walled garden an extension of the living room within the house. It so happened she had already invited me to a luncheon party the following Sunday when she was entertaining for Louis Fischer, the American Jewish journalist on his way home from India. Fischer, a former Zionist was interested in developments here, and interesting about India, and the talk was good. Eric Mills, Commissioner of Immigration and one of the Government's most brilliant civil servants: Squadron Leader Cox, youthful intelligence officer: Michael Quest of the School of Arab Studies: Nick Andronovitch, military attache at the American Consulate, nice quiet man, everybody believes his story that he's Russian. In a way the group was too big for one circle conversation, but Fischer's presence here in this house at this time was a restatement of the tolerance and acceptance the Arabs once had for his people. Unlikely such hospitality would occur much longer the way things are going.

There was talk of the White Paper, of the evidence from cables that the terrorism can be layed at the door of the

officials of the Jewish Agency. As evidence they point to the full curfew in Tel Aviv with a thorough search of the city by military and police, the finding of arsenals and caches of munitions in schools and in the "Great Syangogue", the finding of forged government bonds, of military uniforms of all sorts, the arrests, the outcry of "innocence", "Ill treatment" by the Hebrew press.

The Federal Plan for Palestine, as presented by Herbert Morrison in the House of Commons in London, prompts complaints in the Palestine Post because they won't compromise.

We now have a curfew, 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. out of bounds orders, barricades around the YM. Little did I know when I first came to Jerusalem and decided that for a six months stay the YMCA would serve as adequate place to lodge, that two years later when I was still at work here, security perimeters had made the YM the very centre of one compound. The limitations on all activities are growing and increasing, nerves frayed, people have the jitters, and are quibbling. This Palestine is not a pretty place to live these days. During the past two weeks I had two UNRRA officials up from Cairo and nice and easy and relaxed as they were about things, possibly the easiest pair we've ever had visit us, still they took constant planning and help to see our work and yet remain within the restrictions the military have layed down for all civilians. In retrospect, it's been a horrible time, so little one could

do. I finally found I could help make sandwiches for the troops and was so grateful to fill my off hours with something of this sort, a simple manual activity.

Yesterday morning at coffee Mrs. Tauber and Helen and I had been discussing friendships and what is happening to them here in Palestine. We agreed that people we'd known, been friendly and talkative with a few weeks or months ago, we now could not relax with or find words to talk to them, or they with us. It isn't taht frankness alone won't work, it is that feelings are so close to the surface that frankness can't be faced realistically.

Mrs. Tauber said the other morning "Two people have just come from USA that I used to know in Germany. He once offered me a job in London - how I wish, how I wish I'd taken it." There are few of them who when you finally get to know them, don't break down and admit they'd rather be any place but in Palestine. Of course this is mostly because there is as yet no settlement. When that comes to pass, no matter what the clauses, people will leave, or accept and help to build again.

This morning, November 15th 1945 I went to see Mr. Robert Graves, head of the Department of Labour, Palestine Government, to make some preliminary inquiries about the additional data I need on the Poles. The Foreign Office has asked London UNRRA to take responsibility for them. On what basis and what it will mean to UNRRA for this area, is what

I have to find out. Mr. Graves is elderly, a tall, sad man, very well informed in his field with a good social conscience, and progressive in his work. He exemplified again what one can find in numerous senior government officials here. Good, solid, conscientious people, maybe not always as progressive as younger men, or men in an area of greater contacts and peace might be; but good people trying very hard to do things for Palestine. He wants me to see "my government" meaning Newton who is in charge of Polish Affairs in the Secretariat.

He mentioned that 250 more Polish Jews had in recent months (1946) entered Palestine and that the Polish Delegate had asked him to include them on their lists. The British Government is contributing 88,000L.P. ($352,000) a month to the care of the Poles in Palestine. Since Jewish organizations had brought them here the Jewish Agency was approached to take the responsibility,the answer was again a refusal, so after two weeks in Athlit, the Jewish reception camp, they are turned loose on the country with 7 L.P and no more. President Truman suggests they ask for 100,000 certificates, and the protest mounts when Britain says 1500 is what the country can handle monthly. Mrs. Tauber tells me her German Jewish friends are very critical of the Agency, and that they, the friends, have been insisting 100 persons a month is all Palestine can possibly handle and do any sort of an adjustment job for them. In our office there are unending accounts of the pressure, the coercion that the Jewish Agency uses on the refugee once they've

shwon their hand that they want to go home. They are "outcasts", traitors". One would never have believed the discrimination that Jews can hand out to Jews, it's enough to equal Gestapo concepts. Naturally enough each Agency staff person has a personal and emotional stake in what happens. Jews who are here and want to stay, know that there are short comings and difficulties here, know that the "national home" is thus far not as successful in many respects as they'd hoped. They believe too, that were they to have a numerical majority their status as a state would be automatically secure. They can't bear therefor to see any one of their number leave because everyone lost has a possible effect on the final outcome, or so they think. Yet the irony is that knowing all this, they cannot see that a change in their own attitudes could transform the situation and thereby better it for themselves.

Maja Capek arrived this week to help register the Austrians. Her tirp to Petah Tikvah took overnight, but that's partly because it was a Friday and Tel Aviv and environs, as so much of Palestine in fact, shuts up tight Friday afternoon before the Hebrew Sabbath, if it's not already closed for the Moslem Sabbath on Friday.

Recently I have been bothered with a batch of problems stemming from letters and ideas from Headquarters. I guess we suffer from the complaint of all field offices, or offices at a distance from the main spring of policy. They seem to forget, or to understnd very little of the complications of this country and our work here. Emerson Holcomb wanted

me to get the Palestine Government to request UNRRA to look after all the refugees that were enemy nationals and in need of assistance, which would mean they would be transferred to camps in Egypt. It is first of all difficult to see how he can read this planning into UNRRA's charter. This is not a "liberated" nor a "war devastated area."Most of the refugees have wangled Palestine because they were Jewish, but the Jewish Agency would never the less like to retain them as immigrants. Emerson should see that the Palestine Government could not and would not put itself on record with such a suggestion requesting the removal of people for whom it had made specific plans for their protection here. In addition the White Paper of the British Government retains a choice for the refugee to make, when hostilities cease. Either he can then be counted as an immigrant and remain here, or as a refugee and request repatriation. In the latter case he would have UNRRA"s help in returning home. Eric Mills, the Commissioner of Migration here says "this is a tough enough world for anybody anywhere, they ought at least to be allowed to say where they'd like to live."

November 1946 I went to the French Consulate here today to see Monsieur Serafine about a half dozen French families who want to return to France. The Consulate is a beautiful, modern 1930 building and its offices are a befuddled, disorderly dirty mess, files and papers all over everything. It can't be that they've had no money for staff to keep the place order-

Frans Josef's army, he was divorced seven years ago." I told him that apart from that we had to have proof. He said "but it's in Hebrew." I said "we have staff that can read Hebrew." So he has to produce the wife and the papers before we can take him.

Somebody told Mrs. Kraus, the good-looking white-haired Polish woman who is helping us in the office, that Miss Maryia Withowska, aged 26, had decided not to go to Poland. That was days ago and without verification of any sort Mrs. Kraus took her off the list. The family was in open consternation over this development and said they had all, including Maria, wanted to go together, and now if she can't go none of them will move on this flight. We offered to have this daughter of the family come later, but the whole family have decided to await the next move. Clearance and documentation are substantial for such a family and poor Mrs. Kraus feels so badly because she accepted a third person's verbal message which one can not do in preparing documentation.

The director at El Shatt Camp down near Suez had written, that before Nuseirat Camp in Palestine had closed one of the Greek girls Anna Mangon had run off with a Greek Air Force officer to live in the town of Gaza. She hadn't returned by the time the camp closed and all the remaining refugees had been moved to El Shatt. Her family were concerned that she had not yet come back to be repatriated with them. Well, Sgt. Mitchell says he went to see her yesterday, for

she's moved up to Jerusalem, and that she's living in the convent next door to the Greek Patriarchate. She's dressed as a novice and is assisting a blind nun there. Police are content to leave her there till our next move which will be from Jerusalem and Tel Aviv on November 15. She is a minor and I therefor hope she goes willingly, and not through any pressure they have to bring on her.

Korfias' family will be going then too. Their eleven year old son was in a bad car accident at Nuseirat shortly before it closed. He was put in Sarafand 12th General Hospital and his parents and brothers and sister were allowed to stay on in Jerusalem at 5 L.P. a week for four weeks, paid by the Department of Social Welfare of the Palestine Government. The boy's partially paralyzed and will be in hospital some months before he can go home to the Dodecanese. He'll be moved by hospital coach about the same time we move the family by rail. He will go to the Suez General, and they to El Shatt Camp. The father is a priest. Though he speaks excellent English, he is ignorant, plausible and begging. He's had Mavrides of the consulate call me, and the pleading some of the old world peple can do is amazing. I suppose historically it was their only way of getting what they wanted or better "what they needed." He's not sure he can trust the arrangements they have made for his boy. What he thinks anybody could do, that would be better, it's hard to say.

Kohler, Berkowitz and Eisinger came and sat like a

deputation to ask if they could take their enormous trunks home. We stood firm on army restrictions and heard all sorts of stories about five years military service, giving people their rights, etc. What a crew they are!

Mr. Loj and Dr. Glotnik of the Polish committee, and Mr. Pollack of the Austrian committee are working out luggage arrangements such as to satisfy any expert, and even the UNRRA team that came from Cairo. The crowd in the waiting room was thick all morning: one man fainted on the stairs. By noon 200 and more of the 400 trainload had reported and got their identification cards and chits regarding train times.

The security zone A around the Jerusalem station means we have them go by road to Lydda. I wish I could get some pictures taken at the office and at Lydda when the move is taking place next week. All these past months of insisting no pictures or publicity, have created the effect we needed, but now the bulk of our moves are over the story of helping these people leave Palestine is unrecorded. It is of interest mainly to the people moved and as a record of UNRRA's work, but it should, rightly speaking, be on file for history. In a way one could call it "the other exodus."

Five young Hungarians came to the office this morning. They came to Palestine this early spring - they've no work, no place to live, no money, destitute, and they want us to register them and send them home. Yet the Jewish Agency urge 100,000 be allowed to come, and unemployment is increasing

daily. The Jewish Agency certainly doesn't care about people. They admit it is only a political organization. It's tragic for their people that they are in charge and bring them to this.

September 12th, 1946. Bright moonlight tonight. I couldn't sleep, got up and leaned on my elbows on the window ledge, till my eyes got used to the brilliance, my ears to the night sounds. The cypresses are still lovely and the shrubbery and hedgerows in the garden, the Jackaranda tree is restless and fluttery in the night wind. A loose sheet of galvanized iron hangs from the great scar on the King DAvid across the road, and bangs and crashes each time the wind catches it. Road? It used to be, but now the barbed wire and the military and police cordon have made this strip a cement court, and no traffic passes by at all, unless it be on foot. There go two constables. The King David is all offices now, one or two windows beside the stairwell are lit where government or military work late. The rumble of military trucks and armoured cars in the distance, the clock tower striking midnight, it's a silent and peaceful night otherwise. I finish the sentence and the midnight boots come across the flagstones below my window, changing the guard of sentries that are on duty round the clock here now. I tried to think of pleasanter things, leaning there in the moonlight, of people I've known here and liked, of good times there've been, the lovely countryside. I realized the form there in the garden path is a sentry, gun on his arm, also peering into space in the moonlight. It's his job and not mine.

I write to make me sleepy, but it's not working.

Yesterday at coffee time Helen came out with the story that the hotel and the government had had plenty of warning before the King David massacre, but hadn't chosen to do anything about it: Ilse Stern, our temporary in Mrs. Tauber's place, said "well supposing it's true, what good does it do for them to deny or admit it." Miss Scott just said "couldn't the switchboard have spread the news?"

They know that Haganah, the Stern gang and Irgun Zwei Leumi are also clever at propaganda and this war of nerves and that not only the continuous telephone warnings of bombings and explosions, but also this kind of whispering campaign are all part of the battle. They know all that, yet when they hear a specific story, they are apt to credit it as an exception, instead of disbelieving it. Sooner or later one makes a deliberate attempt to stay off all Palestine news.

November 19th, 1946. A Christian Austrian refugee woman told me this morning that Jochmund (J. A. relief organization that dispenses meal tickets) had told her that her case was unique. They could not give her any help because of course she was not Zionist, and they couldn't give help to anybody who was non-Zionist, that was their orders. But they were sorry in her case and they thought she ought to see if there wasn't somebody else in the country who could help her. She's in a difficult place, no firm will give her work because she's not

Jewish, she can't pay the rates asked by boarding houses, her Jewish "friends", and she seems to have quite a few, won't take her in because of what the community might say or do to them. Someone had commented to her that all this discrimination would make one think that Jews had never heard of such an idea.

Again I think of what one of the Government men said: "We are trying to run a country on democratic lines, and we're finding it difficult, simply because one group among many is determined to take power into its own hands, to gain full control." It was the English philosopher, educator and non Zionist Norman Bentwich who said in "Judea Lives Again": "Jews are gegenrally intolerant of facts which do not fit their ideas, British officials of ideas which do not fit existing facts." Bentwich is professor of International Relations at Jerusalem University, formerly Attorney General, Government of Palestine, and Ministry of Justice in Cairo, lawyer, author and lecturer, a man who carries tremendous respect here in Palestine. In fact, I guess he and Viscount Herbert Samuel, one time High Commissioner of Palestine who has held prominent government appointments in Britain and abroad, are the two most influential voices speaking from within Judaism, against Zionism. They are both now living in England.

Yesterday morning I had a meeting in my office of the Polish Consul General, his military attache, Major Prendergast

of the Secretariat, and Major Peacocke of the Committee on Polish Affairs. I asked Mrs. Tauber to sit in. As an intelligent moderate Mrs. Tauber is as I've previously said, critical of the Jewish Agency leadership and of much that they do, and it goes without saying, of terrorism. She told me in our discussion of attitudes later that she as a Jewess could not sit next to Major Prendergast in the meeting without realizing he might have been a victim of the Secretariat massacre at the King David and that she as a member of the Jewish community blushes to think of the vileness of their methods, blushes at Prendergast's willingness to sit and meet and discuss plans with one of them. She said "The Jews may be very clever, but you can't say they are wise." She quoted other Jews as saying "Foolhardy as they are, they wouldn't be spending £ 100,00 per ship to bring illegals here, when they know the ship on arrival is confiscated, when they know there's no money, no planning for the people at this end." "We are stupid, blundering fools in the way we are handling our affairs here these days, digging our own graves."

Terrorism was new enough in those days that there was disbelief that their aim to have a land of their own could eventually be the product of such tactics. Our contacts with the Jewish Agency were very limited because we had no need. On occasion when I went up to Kingsway to their offices, I would meet with Mr. Moshe Shertok (who later changed his name to Moshe Sharon, when he became minsiter of Foreign Affairs in

Israeli government. He was cordial and business like, but neither of us wanted to prolong such meetings, since our causes and our work made us antagonists.

The Austrians. March 1947. Six weeks ago Holcomb said London had given us the green light on the Austrian registration for repatriation. That was good news and helpful for us to have, for there were many coming in to the office quietly to inquire. Holcomb said London had by cable endorsed his interpretation of the area in which displaced persons were found to read liberated territory as synonymous with United Nations territory, and that since we were repatriating Austrians from countries inside Europe presumably it would be the same from Palestine. So on the basis of the cable from London we went ahead.

The Representative of the Free Austrian Movement and the Friends of Austria Society estimated that there are 1500 who wish to return from Palestine to Vienna, almost without exception all Jews. We registered over the first ten days or two weeks 135, and of these about 40 were needy cases who were to go to El Shatt camp for care and maintenance prior to their repatriation.

And then a Miss Gibbons of the European Regional Office in London arrived here on a day that Maja Capek was due to leave for Haifa to register Czechs and Austrians. The visitor was the means of a veto. Miss Gibbons told me that

London had cabled Washington after theirs to MEO to get confirmation and that Washington had taken the legalistic approach rather than the liberal and vetoed it. She said Cairo had had a cable a week or so before her arrival, and should have let me know.

So there we were with a disappointment for a great many - real hardships and difficulties for a few. The fifty to go on November 15, 1946 had given up their jobs, their rooms or flats, and had ceased to make a secret of the fact that they wanted to go home. Since all Jewish workers in Palestine are listed with the Histradut, the Jewish labour organization covering all occupations, these people were promptly blacklisted, and from then on out, it doesn't matter where in Palestine they move, there is no hope of their getting a job. The Jochmund, or J. A. meal ticket agency for the destitute, would give milk to a Jewish woman getting off the ship from Mauritius because she was going to Nuseirat and then going home to Europe. But these people who have lived and worked here do not receive meal tickets for food because they are "traitors". In the settlement called Petah Tikvah things have reached a pretty serious state. The seven there who had signed up for the 15th have been in to tell me that they are being victimised to a rather alarming degree. Two of them were beaten up. All are greeted with the upraised arm and "Heil Renner, go home Austrian" shouted at them. They stay in after dark, but where they're going to stay after the 15th they don't know.

They never move except in twos or groups and are jeered at and made to feel as outcasts at every turn.

I've put the whole thing before the Free Austrian Movement executives and as much of it as seems wise before the Newspaper men who are plentiful here these days. Dr. Langrod, from London ERO, has taken back a report, and we will keep on doing everything we can think of to help them. I sent two of them as a test case to the Department of Social Welfare and there may be some temporary help from there. I'm not however discouraging their suggestions that maybe Palestine Government could ask the Colonial office to put its two cents worth into the basket by asking UNRRA to take them on. They are in a very bad way, and one accident, despite the security precautions we have taken would put UNRRA in a bad light. Besides it's the first breach of faith this office has had in a difficult community - I don't like any of it.

CHAPTER X

Jerusalem: Notes on the Social Life and the Climate of Opinion.

On a Saturday night in January 1946 I had dinner at the C. H. Ricketts. I met her when I spoke to the University Women's Club at the British Council Room recently. On her explanation of how to get to their house, I stood waiting for

a bus No. 8 for 25 minutes, came in and phoned and got the street address and took a cab. Mr. Ricketts met me on the moonlit pavement at the top of their wide road. Almost before we'd spoken, an explosion went off in town, and another, then the sirens announcing terrorist activity and more bangs during dinner and at 10:30 to 10:45. All traffic stopped, of course, so Mr. Ricketts walked me home. Bright, bright moon, great sworls of barbed wire flung across the road down by the roundabout near the station. A truck parked at an angle to block the traffic - two jeeps with powerful searchlights fanning off through the olive groves on either side. Military police checking us here, and again at the entrance to the YMCA. They were after the Broadcasting Centre in St. Paul's Road but didn't get it. Minor explosions did a little damage. An assistant chief of police lost his life trying to explode land mines and a young South African Captain, Max Rhinehart educated at Cambridge, attached to the British military centre for Arabic Studies, recently back from Christmas leave at Luxor, lost his life. It's a sorry, useless business.

To go back to the party, we had a good dinner in a cold, tall bleak Arab house in a particularly cheerless dining room. Mr. Ricketts is in the government in charge of the cooperatives in this country. He says most co-ops aren't really so. Jewish co-ops are owned by Histradut (the powerful labour organization which is capitalistic), and reaps the benefit rather than the people or members. They talked about Solel Bonen which

is a construction and survey outfit, prospering well. It is backed by the executives of Histradrut and is expanding and taking in other companies and enterprises. Expect eventually it will cover Rutenberg power, potassium works etc. In other words a monopoly with power over the Histradrut membership, national socialism a la Palestine. Their guests tonight Gilbert Sale of Forestry, and the H. E. Chudleigh's, he of the Department of Labour, were very interesting. Sale talked freely. The land area of Palestine is about million dunams - about one percent available for government tree planting. He went on about the goats for quite a while, how they grazed everything down short. If they could be removed, the land would flower and bloom. Once fenced, the difference was unbelievable. He said the Jewish literature and propaganda always makes a terrific point about how the Arabs have allowed the soil to be wasted. They do not continue to tend their stone terracing, they don't know anything about fertilizers, rotation of crops, drainage, contour plowing, etc., and so on, criticizing Arabs as though there were no dustbowls, no arid lands anywhere but in Palestine. Yet the Christian Arab villages are evidence here that with the industry that goes with Christian responsibility as opposed to the fatalism that goes with Moslem thinking, the productivity of the soil can be very great. The whole valley of Ain Karem, said to be John the Baptist's birthplace, is a green and lush bower owing to the efforts of the Christian Arab villagers. The average Moslem

village is poor, barren, dirty and unkempt, since they believe that one is born rich or poor, born on good land or on bad, and that there's nothing one can do about it. Sale says it's very difficult to influence them, two years of talking by a government adviser can be undone overnight by a sentence or two from one of their own effendi. He says the wastage in silt from the Jordan is enormous, discounts the value and possibilities of a Jordan Valley Authority, says it would be fought by Emir Abdullah since the Yarmuk flow would have to be utilized. He also talked considerably about the saline content in soil of Dead Sea Area, the level of the Dead Sea, its evaporation rate and precipitation ratios, much that was technical. He returns again to his theory that a removal of the goats in Palestine would make possible sufficient growth to hold the soil from wind and rain, and that a few years of maturing, of directed planting would make a top soil where there is now nothing but a sub soil, and accomplish much for the country. He spoke of the leopards there are in the Sinai, the hyenas, the jackals, the wildcats etc., etc., and suggested sufficient of these be imported into Palestine to kill off the goats that roam the land from Dan to Beersheba and back. He spoke of planting near Gaza of Australian acacias which are holding the land near the coast and developing into a beautiful grove after I think he said, three years. He said 60% of the orange groves are still Arab owned, the Jews have learned all they know of this culture from the Arabs who have developed it

over the past many decades. He's just recently asked for a training school and been told the government can't afford it, the same as he was told five years ago. Sale is a good knowledgeable, earnest, progressive man working hard at his job, wants a tool to develop it and denial means the loss of so much for the people and the country. How often experts are hired but their advice is of no interest. I asked if he was to appear before the forthcoming Anglo American Commission of Inquiry. The others said they wouldn't dare turn him loose!

Its 1:30 and I've been awake since 12 and can't get back to sleep; I suppose its the uncertainties and tesnions in the country that also affect one's sleep. I tried reading Richard Burton's life "The Arabian Knight", but it didn't succeed in sending me back.Then I've been wondering how I can get Mrs. Tauber in the office to get a better sense of proportion in her work. She does everything, try as I may to give the secretarial and some of the detail work to Helen. She is determined and set in her single track ways. She does it only because she's interested and dedicated, but it produces a lopsided office which is not good for her, nor the others.

I think it must have been the Arab boys' singing that woke me. There was a crowd of them on the terrace under my window and they sang till the rain came. There've been two stiff showers tonight, first rain since that heavy Monday downpour about four weeks ago. Everybody amazed at how late the rains

are in coming. The grey blue soft clouded night is beautiful - it makes Jerusalem's creamy stone buildings so soft and clean and it throws into contrast the tall dark cypresses. Quiet eerie nervous breeze, too. History says its the nervous winds that makes political uncertainties in Jerusalem, and that a turbulent atmosphere will always be her lot, as it always has been.

The hills around Jerusalem, round topped, stoney but opalescent are an attraction to anyone who likes to explore the environment. I had a copy of a government map for hikers which was undoubtedly prepared by people who enjoyed hiking in England. It was accurate, reflecting points of interest and completely reliable so that one did not lose one's way. It served as an encouragement to people like myself who liked to walk, but needed guidance in order to find the way home again.

I talked freely among my friends, both Arab and Jewish, of the hiking I had done round about the countryside. At first I found them unresponsive, and then my journal records: "It was interesting to note the similarity in judgment the two groups of people could have on a wide range of subjects, but this example may be pertinent. More than once my friends in the Jewish community would tell me how risky it was for me to go walking over the hills around Jerusalem as I did on a Sunday. I had always walked miles round about wherever I lived, since

I felt it one of the best ways to know the land and its people. I saw no reason to make any difference here. The Arabs too said I should not do it, that I would have no chance of surviving if I ventured into contact with Jewish youths on a country road. I listened but did not believe either group, and continued my explorations of the lovely opalescent hills. In those days, the walk from Jerusalem to Bethlehem was about five miles on a country road across the top of the hills, and it was a walk I made many times, whether or not I took the local bus home again. One February Sunday when the colour of the hills was made vivid with a carpet of spring flowers, I found myself gathering a bunch, all different, one of a kind. I had a massive bunch in my hand as I crossed the road to pick a big purple thistle. I tugged at the stem and it must have been plain to an old sheik coming down the road that I was having difficulties. He crossed the road and came towards me as he pulled his elaborate big knife from his cumberbund. I looked up and said "Saida" (good morning) as I thought "this must be what my Jewish friends meant," and I wondered what to do. "Mitfadla" (please) he said, and with his knife he cut seven thistles and bowed as he gave them to me and walked away. This was really the only encounter I ever had during the time the roads were open for walking, but it proved to me how mistaken human prejudgments could be."

I was remembering the road through the anti-Lebanon hills from Damascus to the Bekaa valley, the night Collier

and Paul Rowland and I drove back, sunset ahead of us, no clouds to speak of but a warm glow and hue that touched every height with a new tone and radiance. The road was blocked with an enormous flock of sheep buff,brown, black and creamy, clicking their myriad hooves on the macadam coming up out of the deep blue shadows of the valley, led by their shepherd in burnt gold robes. We were silent in the car as we stopped to let them pass. Collier remarked that in the east the men lead their sheep instead of driving them as in the west.

Can't sleep the waning moon stands high, its bright radiance falls the height of the dark cypresses in the garden out in front, and searches to the white full blown roses beneath the Sudanese hanging over my desk. A boy's voice sings an Arabic melody, all the monotonous yearning, the limited scale, the minor key, all the characteristic inhibitions and limitations are in his droning of the song and I lie and wonder what it is in the Arab nature that has porduced such an outcry. Is it the climate denying creative inspiration or variance, is it suppression by other more virile peoples. A man's voice shouts "shut up" and the song ceases. Only a jackal in the hills yowls back, a fitting answer to the man, but not the boy.

On another Sunday morning Evelyn Rauch, the three Seidlers and I left the Y at 8:30, caught the Arab bus to Hebron from Jaffa Gate, rode half an hour and got off at a side road called Nahalin. Up this road to the top of the hill, we walked along the ridges about two hours or nearer three.

Cloud studded sky and the quickly moving shadows added a depth and richness to the stony barren landscape. We could look down on Bethlehem, on Herod's Tomb, on the square topped mountain, on the Dead Sea and away across to the Mountains of Moab in Trans Jordan. On the other side the land spread out to the distance and in the background the Mediterranean blue as could be. I'd never before seen such a view in Palestine, side to side of it."

"Dutch Interior. One of the Yugoslav refugees at El Arish camp has continued to hold down his self-appointed job of Priest for the Roman Catholics there. Recently he went berserk, and on all Souls' Day caused a terrible commotion criticizing the camp administration and commandant Major Broude for allowing the people to work at building themselves a recreation hall that day. Despite Broude's efforts to have him realize that no Catholic was working, the man Don Cecic preached a sermon of violent wrath against UNRRA and the camp.

Brigadier Waddington, our chief in Cairo, telephoned and asked me to call on the Patriarch here in Jerusalem to have the priest removed and to get a substitute for him. The Patriarch's an old man and has recently taken to his bed as quite ill, so I had to see Canon Maad in his place, a little round-headed Dutchman who met me cordially in the corridor of the hostel-monastery where he was drinking coffee with an

airman. He led me down one corridor and down another and finally into a room which was evidently his private quarters. The big square ceilinged room was flanked on one side by a couch and chairs around a coffee table. There was a burlap screen arrangement as closet and washroom, a big desk, an iron bedstead, and of course a cross, and the medallions, and paraphernalia that hang in such premises everywhere. A lovely shaft of sunlight fell sidewise through the window, on a big, gaudy bird in a cage hanging there against the magnolia trees in the courtyard. Our conversation was brief, I am skeptical that anything I asked or said will ever occur to him again. For by this time I noted two things, one, that he'd locked the door behind us, and that he was quite tight at eleven in the morning.

It seemed to me the Agronsky party was more interesting than pleasureable. Gershon Agronsky is founder and editor of the only English language paper in the county "The Palestine Post". He is reputed to be charming, to me he does not give that impression so much as that he is suspicious and unsure. These are not uncommon qualities to be found among the intelligentsia in this Jewish community. After all this is a momentous time for their whole people, with world-wide implications for them and for others. Why wouldn't there be some uncertainty for them. Aware that I was in a small minority among forty or fifty guests, he seemed to expect me to be hostile, would I, without introduction, admittedly difficult in a stand-up party, make over-

tures to other guests, seek out the one or two other non Jews, stay with the first people to whom he introduced me, or wander on. He passed and repassed me during the evening, not until late did he open a conversation. He threw at me "Where do you live"? - "at the Y" - "Safe, eh?" Did he mean to imply that I was safe from bombs, or from criticism by one or other group, since neither a Jewish hotel or pension, nor an Arab establishment had I chosen to show which way I stood. Maybe he's right, and maybe that's why I put up with Y food. At least its an attempt to be impartial.

The Basilica at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, simply beautiful on the occasion of the Greek Orthodox Christmas two weeks after ours. Arriving about 10:15 p.m., the dark mass of people toward the front emphasized the tall spectral gloom above and covered the difficencies of the Edward IV roof which is wooden and makeshift. The glitter of myriad candles and of coloured glass balls hanging from gilt chandeliers gave a jewelled effect to the scene emphasizing its brilliance. The processional was elaborate, the priests in pale grey or pale blue Damascus brocades with black Orthodox mitred head dresses. The procession went from transept to grotto, supposedly the scene of Christ's birth, and up and around the Basilica three times chanting all the while. This church dates from St. Helena's day, third century, and its double row of stone pillars on each side of the nave lends an added grandeur to this occasion. Finally the procession approaches front center and the climax

of the mass is given emphasis as the chandeliers are swung to express the jubilation of the moment. Collier whispers "why do they swing the chandeliers?" Helen, who had been briefed by her Catholic priest said "to make the candles burn even." We each get what we bring to these occasions. The mysticism of the east is very evident in all of them, a lack of participation by the crowd is marked. For me the enjoyment is mainly aesthetic. To me it is difficult for it to become a religious experience. It is the total mise-en-scene that impresses me. This huge crowd silent and absorbed as though to them it's not only their religion, but a social occasion in which they join with all their community, an evening of outright pleasure for them. The wrapt wonder in which they behold it, the beauty of individual faces facing the candles, drinking in all they see. The incense and the chanting, all of this creates a very moving and beautiful picture which would be hard to match in the west.

One day I had lunch with Katy Antonius at her house and met Nassib Boulos, a bright young man with the Arab Information Office here, who has the possibility of going to Washington. He's preparing a report on the Arab side of the argument, has read me what he's written - it's an excellent piece of work, concentrated in facts, ideas and material and well written. He's also read me, over the tea cups in Katy's nice house, some of his short stories on Arab village life - the sort of thing that needs to be done for this part of the

world. He'll do a better job on this part of his work when he comes back from Washington. Fresh new eyes to some of the scenes here will help him to catch the atmosphere better.

Yesterday we walked down through the old city and though much of it is familiar to me by now he showed me some (to me) new spots, principally St.Anne's 11th - 12th century Crusaders church - beautiful in its simple, grey stone: the Pools of Bethesda, the rim of the Mosque area; and from St. Stephen's Gate back to Damascus gate and up on the walls. We walked quite a distance on top of the walls, perilous bits and all, around toward Herod's gate, and sat in the sun overlooking all the grey stone uneven rooftops, inverted bowl roofs as well as the flat ones, beyond to Kidron Valley, Mount of Olives, Government House Hill and all the streets outside the wall and below General Gordon's Calvary and the quarries. We took a taxi to his house for tea, picked violets and red roses in the wintry garden and later joined Albert Hourani at the King David for supper together. They are an intelligent pair and good company.

Nassib said he'd take no religion, but if he took to one it would be to Roman Catholicism. He explains this by saying that protestantism has drained all significance out of religion by its rationalism, that religion must have emotionalism and mysticism in it or it's of no value. There's much in what he says and it's quite characteristic that a young man of the east would find such a thing to say for people here allow their instincts to guide them much more than do those of us in the

west. It's so interesting the contrast in his or other easterners' approach to things compared with ours.

Nassib comes from a village near Acre, a model village with industry and business activity in it. His father was a doctor, travelled a lot to escape from his family of six sons. His mother, a typical village woman who would not learn, nor rise to her husband's level in the community. Several times the village women came to his mother, several times the simple men came to his father, to find out what it was the Doctor knew so that they could produce sons, when other people produced daughters, wanted sons and didn't have them. There was little love between his parents. In 1932 his next youngest brother was killed in a car accident and the mother blamed the father and shattered the family relationship by continuing to do so. Nassib says they weren't brought up, they just grew. He's had Beirut University as background, and law training here in Jerusalem. He's remarkably well read, alert to ideas, is full of nervous energy, is a spend thrift, ambitious and has a craving for new experience and adventure. He has never been away from the Middle East and would benefit to do so. He hopes he gets the job in Arab Information Centre in Washington. He and Albert Hourani, a lecturer at Oxford University here on leave, were talking Sunday evening about studying but Nassib admits it would do more for him, than he could contribute to the Arab cause through further study.

Nassib said he enjoyed his studying, most of the time he returned to his village, put on Eastern clothing, Kaffieh and all, and lived and worked at his studies with the family there. Albert took a double Honours course in History and Philosophy at Oxford. Both his brothers are also double Honours Oxonians. Charles is going to New York in charge of the Centre there, Cecil is deputy to President Boumedienne of Algeria. A brilliant family, Albert, the one on the faculty at Oxford is more typically Arab in appearance and in his manner of weighing his reactions. He is quiet, almost silent, but more penetrating, and when he says something it's well worth listening to.

August 13th, 1946. I think I wrote about Faigel and Baruch Braude before, I was at their penthouse apartment for supper last night and since it was an instance illustrative of current Palestinian atmosphere and attitudes, I write of them again. She's middle thirties, from the Bronx, fairly good-looking, fond of her friends, manager at the local Reuters office. He comes of an old Palestinian Jewish family and has taken over his father's accountancy firm. Since Delia the month old baby arrived, the alterations on their apartment have been completed and they now have six good sized rooms and a glorious roof top terrace with plantings and a lovely view toward the Trans Jordan hills. A car and a cabin at Herzlia on the coast, complete a picture which includes many comforts.

Baruch's a fool over the new baby, scarcely lets her sleep without going to look at her. Faigel cares not a whit about cooking, likes guests that do it for her. I once used all the eggs in the house to make an omelet for six of us, so I don't get asked very often to give a hand in the kitchen.

Roy Elston, the former Foreign office man who now writes "Column One" in the Palestine Post as David Courtney, was there. I guess he's able enough though his column is tapering off and he looks successively more dissipated each time one sees him. He's trying to get a divorce so he can marry the fresh sweet young Monica Dane who cooked the eggs this time, and who has recently come from England to join him here. John Kimche, the Reuter's man, was the other one - he was hungry, didn't want a drink, seemed annoyed that anybody else wanted to take time for it. Roy got irritable as the water for the weiners took so long to boil.

I arrived first, straight from the office round the corner, and duly and honestly admired the Baby Delia, and the new rooms. Faigel said, 'They'd heard a rumour their flat was going to be requisitioned, their house in fact, for his parents live below. It's a prevalent fear for since the King David disaster the authorities are taking over blocks of offices and buildings, putting many areas behind barbed wire, finding houses where they can have small messes and house their officers and men on patrol duties, and guard them. So there was the

usual complaining resentment in Faigel's remark, and she stated flatly she was going to continue to live here.

Baruch told Roy that the court trial of the terrorists who bombed the railway yards and buildings in Haifa a month or so ago began today in that city and that every time the court president opened his mouth to speak the young people being tried began to sing - he stopped - they stopped - he began - they began - he left the court and on his return they again began. Baruch was not condoning, but was certainly not critical. Roy asked him what they thought they gained. Baruch said they didn't believe this court was the court to try them, and this was their way of expressing it. Roy said but it was the court of the land. Of course we all knew that what was implied was that if the Jewish state had been granted they would have their own courts, and as well there would be no cause for trouble and ensuing court cases. All that went unsaid. I asked if they were very young? non- committal responses, subject dropped.

Telephone calls from Reuters for Faigel. There's to be an announcement by the British government at midnight about the illegals in the ships in Haifa harbour. There were rumours about - there'll be trouble at 12:01. Faigel threw out aggressively, and as if it were as simple as all that, "Why don't they bring in the 100,000 and then there won't be any trouble."

There was no answer, I wonder if she really believes it's as simple as all that, no one else there did. I held my tongue for the instance of the Hungarians, already recorded, has been repeatdd too frequently in our office recently for us not to know what difficult circumstances these new "illegals" are in. I wanted to gently ask "Who'd take care of them?" What's the use, they don't want the truth, they won't face it.

There were various and assorted cracks at the British government all evening. Kimche, Elston, Dane are all English. Kimche, a Jew has his own angle on it - Elston destroys most everything he thinks about and young Monica follows in her own way. I guess I'm as loyal as there was there. Anyhow I winced more than once at remarks made by this group, and particularly by members of a group whom Britain has attempted so valiantly to help these last twenty-five, almost thirty years in this barren land. Cracks like "They're taking over our main Jewish Post Office - well it couldn't be run any worse than it is." Most of the public find no cause for complaint, and it is to be remembered that the general postmaster lost his life by gunfire at the time of the King David explosion. Talk of sons going into this and that - suppose it was fourth sons who went into Palestine Police - all kinds of innuendos and sniping.

Then there was considerable talk of how the Irqun Zwei Leumi gets its funds. Canvasses Jewish businessmen,

assessing them from £ 5,000 for their terrorist activities with threats if they don't oblige. Roy asked what happens if they don't pay up. Kimche said nothing. The whole evening was tattered with bits of conversation, with questioning glances to see what the other person was thinking, with subjects begun and not developed, for everyone was stifled with feelings - bitterness in some, sensitivity to it in others, or the shades of political leaning man for man of us being so definitely demarcated that unimpassioned discussion was impossible.

CHAPTER XI

Closing down: The Ending of UNRRA's work in Palestine.

Curfews and security zones obstructed easy movement about Jerusalem and the general atmosphereof military control robbed one of freedom that life normally provides or permits. The Anglo American Commission arrived to spend five days deciding what should be done to solve the "Palestine Problem". The group was made up of 24 men from the United States and Britain who were charged with the task of fact finding and the drafting of a solution. They used the auditorium at the Y to hold some of their hearings and the place was full of aides and reporters round the clock. Much as one hoped they would come up with the answer, people who understood the intricacies of the situation could not but be pessimistic if not cynical

about this attempt. The best that could be said for it, was that it was widening the responsibility, so that Britain would no longer be carrying the onus of this world problem, alone.

At the United Nations it had been decided that UNRRA was to be terminated as of the end of June 1947, and the Preparatory Committee for the International Refugee Organization (PCIRO) was to come into existence July 1st 1947 to continue to conclude UNRRA's work with displaced persons.

It had become increasingly clear throughout Europe that there were many many people who were eligible for UNRRA's assistance, but who were not interested in returning to their countries of birth, or of former residence, and that any new organization should be empowered to help people become re-settled. To be sure the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (IGCR) was assisting many people in movement abroad, but as with its successor organization, the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration from Europe (ICME) only some of the governments interested in a solution for the refugee problem supported this organization. Countries of the East block led by the Soviet Union were not interested in helping people go elsewhere rather than be repatriated. In the overall post-war picture the millions repatriated far out numbered those requesting resettlement. Yet PCIRO and subsequently IRO became identified mainly with resettlement because the caseload they fell heir to was

made up of the residual refugees who requested help to go abroad, and who were not interested in repatriation. Eligibility clauses for IRO were the same as UNRRA had developed and repatriation was a part of IRO's authorized activity. The office in Jerusalem did not receive any requests for resettlement. People had come to Palestine to escape the war, or else to migrate there on a permanent basis, in which latter case they were staying on here, and any programme for resettlement was not envisaged, nor indicated by local need.

After the many flights and moves UNRRA's work had accomplished in Palestine, our file of cases requesting help had dwindled to those people for whom plans had not yet worked out. Either their documentation was inadequate as to prove a barrier to their acceptance by their own or other government, or a government edict stood between them and their movement. Any office dealing with human beings does not arrive at a morning when one can say "the work is finished". And Jerusalem office was no exception. Each day brought us new faces and new problems, albeit their numbers by this time were lower. In normal times such cases take months or sometimes years to solve, and even though UNRRA had evolved almost a mystique for solving difficult cases because it had offices and staff in the field to help, still the hard facts of economics and financial backing had to be faced, and June 30th 1947 was set as the time of UNRRA's closing.

With Cairo we tried to plan for the future of the office and the work both here and in the Lebanon. Cairo made the decision to have a separate office in Beirut, and it took them some months to find a staff director for each office. Indeed Mrs. Tauber and Paula were left to carry on the work as best they could and to expect that Cairo would send up a director as soon as he could be found. (Long weeks later they wrote me a lucid tale of their having to put on Arab clothing and to walk miles to get themselves out of the danger in the area of the office.). For my part I was anxious that arrangements could be completed as quickly as possible, so that I could get away home on sick leave. I had fallen heir to the prevailing problem in this part of the world - parasites. Doctor put me in a small nursing home, to undergo eleven days of enmytine treatment which chased away the amoeba, but left me with a mystifying greatly increased white corpuscle blood count. It took my friend Dr.Harry Most in charge of the Ne York University School of Medicines Tropical Medicine Department several weeks to diagnose the problem and solve it.

In Jerusalem I booked my flight home with Trans World Airlines and was asked to be in touch with their office the morning I was to leave to learn the hour of departure. At my third visit to their office, they admitted "the boys" were just down in Tel Aviv celebrating" the UN decision of the day before November 29, 1947 that the Jews were to have their national

home. I scolded the TWA staff person "Look I'm just flying with them. Don't tell me we are delayed because of the crew's celebrations". We finally flew at sundown.

At its peak UNRRA had offices in 42 countries, and employed 12,889 people from 51 countries as staff. It was a pioneering humanitarian effort of extensive proportions, and it captured the world's interest and support in a way that precludes comparison.

It was, for those of us who worked for UNRRA an exceptional period in our lives that lifted us above the general run of work assignments or occupations to a time of service, of pioneering and fulfilment that does not happen to individuals very often in the normal working world.

I think it must be said of overseas so called humanitarian assignments, that no matter the contribution one is able to make, the advantages, the privilege, the enrichment of one's experience all add up to a greater gain for the individual, than for the organization, the country or the people for which one worked.

whom